

COUNTRY LIFE

THE JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN
COUNTRY LIFE AND COUNTRY PURSUITS. ILLUSTRATED.

VOL. IX.—No. 223. [REGISTERED AT THE
G.P.O. AS A NEWSPAPER.] SATURDAY, APRIL 13th, 1901.

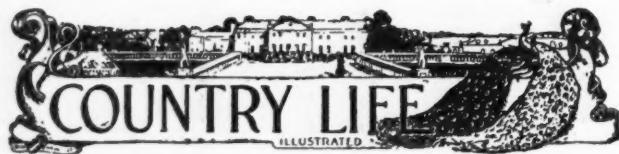
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BY POST, 6½D.



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MRS. ARTHUR PAGET.

52 Gower Street.



**THE Journal for all interested in
Country Life and Country Pursuits**

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
<i>Our Frontispiece: Mrs. Arthur Paget</i> ...	449, 455
<i>A Proposed Fisheries Board</i> ...	450
<i>Country Notes</i> ...	451
“ <i>Speed the Plough.</i> ” (Illustrated) ...	453
<i>On the Green</i> ...	455
<i>About Water Gardens.</i> (Illustrated) ...	455
<i>The Sower</i> ...	456
<i>Transplanting John Knox’s Tree.</i> (Illustrated) ...	456
<i>Ancient Bridges.</i> (Illustrated) ...	457
<i>The Old School Naturalists: I.—White of Selborne.</i> (Illustrated) ...	460
“ <i>Cast Up by the Sea</i> ” ...	462
<i>In the Garden.</i> (Illustrated) ...	462
<i>Garaens Old and New: Maiden Bradley.</i> (Illustrated) ...	464
<i>Lazy Noon</i> ...	468
<i>Old Bill</i> ...	469
<i>Water-kelpies.</i> (Illustrated) ...	470
<i>A Threefold Cord.</i> (Illustrated) ...	472
<i>The Past Shooting Season.—II.</i> ...	473
<i>The Oyster at Home.</i> (Illustrated) ...	474
<i>Books of the Day</i> ...	476
<i>At the Theatre.</i> (Illustrated) ...	477
<i>Wild Country Life</i> ...	478
<i>Correspondence</i> ...	479

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**A PROPOSED . . .
FISHERIES BOARD**

MR. MORETON FREWEN makes a very timely and useful suggestion in the last number of *The Anglo-Saxon Review*. It is that the control of the fishing industry should be taken out of the hands of the Board of Trade and handed over to a new department established for the purpose. The only objection to the present system is that the Board of Trade has its hands too full already. On the other hand, the importance of our fisheries is continually increasing, and there are many reasons for fostering them. Not the least is the fact that we very much need for Imperial purposes more men who have been brought up to work on the sea. The fishing-boat is the natural nursery of men for

the Navy and the Mercantile Marine. Further, it has been demonstrated that more return for labour is to be obtained from the sea at present than from land—that is, to the individual. We can never hope that fishing will employ as many hands as agriculture, but, still, about 300 tons of fish are sold daily on an average in London, and that is very nearly the quantity of beef disposed of. Fish, too, is gradually increasing in price, having gone up some 20 per cent. in the last ten years. But the strongest reason of all lies in the advisability of increasing this part of our food supply. That this could be done effectually, we have reason to believe from the splendid results achieved in Canada, the United States, and Germany. Our own efforts have hitherto been made on a scale too small to affect the food supply perceptibly, and our attention has been concentrated on minor questions. It is scarcely open to dispute that all along the fringe of the coast the supply of fish has greatly dwindled, and the returns made by line fishermen are more unsatisfactory every six months. Some hold, of course, that this is the fault of the trawlers, and are keen on substituting a twenty-five-mile for the present three-mile limit. In itself this might be advisable, but we are not concerned to discuss it just now. The wider issue is whether fish could be propagated and bred until an acre of salt water would have as definite a value as an acre of meadow-land. Mr. Moreton Frewen appears to think that this is fairly within practical range.

We do not dispute his conclusion, but have some doubt as to the means that should be adopted. He is very much alive to the destructiveness of those creatures that prey on fish or their spawn, from whales down to starfish. Even against wildfowl he nourishes a grudge, and apparently would wage war upon such birds as the cormorant and the gannet that habitually prey on fish. It would be in the nature of a very great sacrifice to throw the Wild Birds' Protection Acts to the winds and slay the fowls of the air that the fishes in the sea might multiply. The efficacy of such a drastic course is questionable, and we doubt if there is the slightest necessity for it. Not in that way are crops of any other kind produced. The husbandman who wishes to raise a crop of wheat does not begin by killing out all the grain-eating creatures, although he might make out a very strong case against the sparrows, wood-pigeons, rooks, rats, mice, and other animals that will inevitably levy tithe on the fruits of his labour. Or take a still more striking illustration. Suppose an oak tree laden with acorns. In the natural way, the chances are against a single one being allowed to develop into an oak. First, the squirrel and other beasts, the pheasant and other birds, destroy a majority in the acorn stages, then, should a few by luck or chance be allowed to strike root, there are a million forces that may kill them out before they get to a foot in height. Self-sown oaks are very rare indeed. Or turn to the human family itself, and consider how much higher the death-rate is in a savage and neglected country than in one that is highly civilised. In the latter the chances of the individual are enormously multiplied, but in each case the result is achieved not by destruction but by care. The farmer does not sweep away all hostile life, but he takes such measures as provide that his tillage will ensure a crop far beyond what could be achieved in a state of Nature. Out of this abundance wild things may claim a share that, though greater than they would otherwise have, is a small percentage of the total. So the nurseryman, if he took pains to sow all the acorns borne on an oak, could afford to lose a very large number. Humanity thrives, again, chiefly because precautions are taken against the various diseases and dangers by which it is threatened.

All this goes to show that if the fish supply is to be greatly increased the proper step to take is that of ensuring the fertilisation of the ova and the growth of the young. Produce an immense number, and some will survive. In other words, the wastefulness of Nature has to be corrected. It has been calculated that the female salmon lays about a thousand eggs, and only about 2 per cent. of these are fertilised, to begin with. Science could probably raise this to 90 per cent. To ensure great quantities, therefore, is undoubtedly the right policy. However, that is really a side issue. With the main contention of Mr. Moreton Frewen we are in cordial agreement. Not in the case of salt water only, but even more in regard to fresh water, there is unlimited scope for improving the food supply; only it will have to be set about in earnest by a body which can concentrate all its energies upon this one subject. Those who rent the rod-fishings assert that they get no adequate return in sport for the rent they pay, and the companies who own the various net-fishings are certainly in no very affluent condition. Poaching prevails to an unlimited extent; and altogether the state of affairs could not be more thoroughly unsatisfactory. On the other hand, there are many suitable streams and sheets of water that never have been adequately stocked and yet are capable of holding a fair supply of fish. These and many other matters could very well be attended to; but this of course would enlist in the service the leading experts of the day. It is evident that the Board would have no lack of work, and if, as has been done in Germany and the United

States, it could vastly increase the supply, and so not only enlarge our sources of food, but find lucrative and healthy employment for a greater number of fishermen, it would deserve the widest support, for these are objects well worth striving for. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the proposal will not be allowed to drop, but will be pushed on to a practical result.



THE celebration of the King of Denmark's eighty-third birthday passed off without a hitch of any kind. Copenhagen was gaily decorated with flags, and guns boomed from the forts and from the Russian Imperial yacht "Standart" that lay in the roads. Despite the burden of so many years, King Christian IX. is in the enjoyment of excellent health, and appeared to take a genuine pleasure in the festivities got up by his loyal subjects. Queen Alexandra, whose life recently has been strangely varied with its mourning and parting, and yet its pomp, splendour, and rejoicing, started home again on Tuesday, to the satisfaction of English people, who are most pleased when she is at home, filial as was the duty that took her abroad just now.

We all knew that the ignorance of the Boers was colossal, but the letter written by the commandant of Boshof, and published in the *Times* of Tuesday, is really almost incredible. He, apparently in perfect good faith, gives no fewer than eleven reasons for not surrendering—for, in fact, holding that the Boers have got the best of it. Among these it is stated to be the general opinion of Europe that the Boers must win; that "Stead, in the *Review of Reviews*, even predicts the general downfall of England"; that Olive Schreiner shares this opinion; that Kate Courtney (who is Kate Courtney?) fears that the end will be a European war. Kaiser Wilhelm is going to side with the Boers now that the Queen is dead. The ingenuous commandant adds, as a postscript—"The above is the naked truth, but if you can prove one of these points to be untrue or a lie, I promise you to come and lay down my arms." Against this sort of thing how are we to make headway? Certainly the Leyds' agency has much to answer for, but so have those English publicists who continue to raise false hopes in the minds of these poor misled rustics. Their faddy opinions are costing human blood. But for them the struggle would have ended long ago, and the people of the Transvaal been enabled to return to their natural avocations.

We are glad to learn that Sir Edmund Antrobus, acting on the best advice, is taking steps to preserve Stonehenge, since it is apparent that the military authorities are in the way of revolutionising Salisbury Plain. It was bad enough before, when the oldest and most interesting memorial in Great Britain was used mostly as a place to picnic in, and when the turf all round was so cut up by wheels as to resemble a ploughed field. But now that the camp is fixed within sight and a new line runs down from Grateley, and the jerry-builder is beginning to run up his brick-and-slate villas, Stonehenge clearly stands more in need of protection than it ever did before. The great stone that fell and was smashed in two on the last day of the century may easily be the precursor of others, since it appears that these stones are not sunk deeply into the ground. Obviously the remedy is to enclose the circle in a fence. Unhappily it lies in an angle made by two roads, so that approach to it cannot be hindered, but at all costs the picnic parties must be kept outside the circle. At Easter, when we were there, a shivering policeman stood guard over the stones and had a very light task, but it is in summer, especially during June, that the place is most attractive. Few that go really appreciate the simple massive grandeur of this primitive cathedral; they regard it simply as something to be seen and the excuse for a trip. There is abundant room for them on Salisbury Plain, and henceforth we trust they will be obliged to keep their luncheon-baskets at least a hundred yards from the altar.

Those who formed part of the usual Easter exit from town found the country very backward for April. Scarcely a tint of

new green has yet come on the meadows, and the woodlands are as bare and dark as in midwinter, though in exceptionally warm and sheltered nooks the elder and the hawthorn have unfolded their leaves, and the long beech buds are ready to break. But most things are late this year. The chiff-chaff has come back, and in a few days the cuckoo may be expected, but the schoolboy must have gone birds'-nesting in vain, save for a few birds that are always early. Town sparrows are getting into a way of breeding all the year round, and some of the larger birds, such as rooks, wood-pigeons, herons, and the like, build in March regardless of weather, as does the missel-thrush. The eager little long-tailed tit is also a very early nester; but save for these, which, so to speak, are always with us, the birds seem to have found it too cold for love-making. On Good Friday the amorous holiday-maker who takes his girl to 'Appy 'Ampstead or Epping Forest must have suffered from the same complaint. A bitter piercing wind, driving showers of cold sleet in your face, ground sodden with the rains of a long wet winter—these are scarcely the accessories of a happy day in the country.

The National Union of Elementary Teachers always have a good innings at Easter, but one failed to discern exactly what they would be at this year. Mr. Blacker in his presidential address declaimed with great eloquence against the effects of bad home influence, to which he traced the origin of Hooliganism. One has to remember, however, that the fathers and mothers, at any rate those under middle age, are themselves products of our educational system, and thus the schoolmaster is not entitled to evade responsibility himself and place it on the parent. The fact is, however, that home influence for good or evil remains a fairly constant quantity at all times, but we have gone on wrong lines in teaching, trusting far too much to books and too little to the training of eye and muscle. This is especially true as regards country children, on whom the effect of such education as they receive is to make them very unfit for country labour and very discontented with it, and to fill them with entirely false notions of what is "gentle." It is because schoolmasters themselves do not recognise this that we have little sympathy with Mr. Blacker's plea that inspectors should be chosen from among teachers. A scholar from one of the Universities is less likely to be hampered by class prejudices, and the chances are all in favour of his interpreting education in a large and liberal spirit.

The romance attached to Gainsborough's famous picture of the Duchess of Devonshire has, after all, had a pleasant ending. It was originally stolen in London as long ago as 1876, for the purpose of obtaining funds to secure the release of a French prisoner, the case against whom ultimately failed on a technical point, so that if the thief had been "an honest gentleman," as the old highwaymen used to proclaim themselves, he ought to have returned the portrait with an apology. But partly out of pure mammon worship, partly because he feared the law, he stood out for a rich reward and a free pardon. He carried the picture to New York, stored it up in a specially-constructed trunk, and then went off on his wanderings, getting himself arrested at Constantinople for forgery. What the intelligent Laffan calls an American "sport" got him out of trouble, and then proceeded to raise the wind by entering into diplomatic relations with the detectives for the return of the picture. It was all done in a calm and leisurely manner, so that a quarter of a century has elapsed since the day of the theft. That is a very long time, and if the thief be a person of a reflective turn of mind, he will probably meditate, as he handles the £5,000 which Mr. Morland Agnew is said to have paid for getting back his treasure, how easy it had been for him to die in the interval. He appears from this account to be such a very sanguine, speculative, rambling kind of a burglar, that one is curious to know more of his story.

In the person of Mr. George Smith, the most famous publisher of his time has passed away. His death seems already to give an air of remoteness to the nineteenth century, for his friends were drawn from its great names. Thackeray, who was his first editor of the *Cornhill*, the Brontës, George Eliot, Mrs. Gaskell, Robert Browning, Matthew Arnold—it seems no time since their books were being looked forward to, and yet those who knew them are a diminishing number. "And did you once see Shelley plain?" asks Browning in one of his poems, and he, too, has passed from human ken. One does remain, Mr. Frederick Greenwood, who worked out Thackeray's plan of a paper written "by gentlemen for gentlemen," and was Mr. Smith's first editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, but the years add to his loneliness. Of course the monument more enduring than marble left behind by the great publisher is "The Dictionary of National Biography." It was a great thing for him, when nearly all the rest of his calling think of nothing but what is popular and profitable, to have done this thing for England's sake. He faced the pecuniary loss it involved with courage and even pride, and we offer our farewell to a strong and kindly man.

The *Sun* under its present management is a very intelligently-conducted newspaper, but it is a pity more pains are not taken to make it accurate in regard to matters pertaining to natural history. Perhaps it does not sin more than others, but very great harm is done by such an article as it had some time ago on "Costly Eggs," wherein prices were so grossly exaggerated as to tempt rustics to place the Wild Birds' Protection Acts at defiance. It said the eggs of the great northern diver frequently fetch £5 apiece. Well, there is a saving virtue in "frequently," but the actual worth of the eggs is about 6s. each. However, there is no authenticated case of this bird ever having bred in Great Britain. "The egg of the nutcracker crow is worth £2 if found in England." The italics are ours. Of course, this bird has never bred in England, and there are only about thirty records of it having been seen. A foreign egg is worth about 12s. 6d.

"A raven's egg is worth about a pound." We hope there will not be a run on ravens' eggs on account of this, since they are really worth only up to 5s. if native, 2s. if foreign. "The bearded tit's nest has become so rare that £4 can be easily had for one of its eggs." That is putting a premium on the eggs of this beautiful species. In point of fact, a British nest and full complement of eggs can be bought for 20s. The writer adds that "these eggs are very small, and are frequently mistaken for those of the common wren." They are not really small, and are quite differently marked and shaped. We are told that "the crested grebe's eggs, which were very common a few years ago, are becoming extremely rare, being worth at least a pound apiece." Well, Mr. Howard Saunders will scarcely be considered a mean authority, and what he says is that "its increase during the last decade has been remarkable." The egg is worth about sixpence. We have been at the trouble to correct these misstatements, not out of any desire to find fault with our contemporary, but because they get copied into country papers and lead to a great deal of egg-taking, which is bad for the birds and disappointing to the birds'-nester, who will soon discover that he has been listening to mere fairy tales.

In regard to the article that appeared a fortnight ago on Pallinsburn Gull Pond, Mr. Atkinson, who was the tenant of Pallinsburn House, writes us an extremely interesting letter. He says that in 1892, the first year of his tenancy, the gulls were in incredible numbers, and he took great care that they should not be molested. In 1893 they appeared as usual, but after spending a few days in preparing to breed most of them disappeared, and there was not more than one third of the number of nests of the preceding season. Next year, the last of Mr. Atkinson's tenancy, only the same number arrived as in 1893. He says: "There is no doubt whatever that the enormous increase in the number of rooks drove them away, but the extraordinary drought of 1893 had, I think, something to do with it, as the pond, never more than 2ft. deep, was reduced to a mere pool, and the end which the gulls bred on was a horrible slough of evil-smelling mud." We are glad to learn that Mr. Atkinson shot a considerable number of rooks, which were destroying the eggs by hundreds. The increase of these birds in Northumberland has become a nuisance alike to farmers and sportsmen. They enter the very farmyards, and carry off eggs and chicks.

Referring to a recent leading article in *COUNTRY LIFE*, a correspondent writes to call attention to the encouragement at once of the breeding and training of a class of horse suitable for the Mounted Infantry, and of increasing the national efficiency in arms by promoting the formation of many more companies of mounted Volunteers than are in existence at present. That a soldier of the type that would thus be produced, provided he could be made efficient, would be of the utmost value, it is hard for any who have read the lessons of the war in South Africa to doubt, and that recruits would readily come forward to fill the ranks of these mounted Volunteers is not any more to be doubted when we consider the eagerness that is shown to join the companies of the kind that are on the present roll. The mounted soldier's *métier* is one that has perhaps more attraction than any other branch of the Service, and there seems no reason that a force no less serviceable than the present Yeomanry should not be formed and drilled during the hours that the young men of the upper middle class are able to spare from their ordinary work. They would form, in fact, a force having in some degree the aptitudes of our Boer enemies.

The trout and the fly have taken advantage of the warmer weather of Easter coming after the severe and long spring that preceded it, and anglers who take their holiday in fishing the earlier streams have found the advantage too. It really does seem as if the trout-fisher had reached the end of his evil days and things were about to go a little better with him in the future. Almost ever since the days of Isaac Walton, the good—ever, at least, since fishing became the sport of more than an insignificant few—the angler's diary has consisted, in a great measure, of a jeremiad over his poor sport as compared with the whales and

their numbers that were taken by the angle of his forefathers. And that has gone on until the cry of the disappointment grew too bitter, and men began to see that if they went on taking trout out of every river and stream in the kingdom, they could not fairly expect the population of the water to remain the same as before they began this depopulating. That consideration led by degrees to the establishment of the many hatcheries that are in England to-day; and the hatcheries are just beginning to make their presence felt by the help they are giving to our streams. Happily there seems to be food enough in the rivers for more trout than we ever are likely to turn into them.

Something seems not quite right in regard to the arrangements for the championship racquets at Queen's Club. No doubt it is very difficult to make arrangements that are best suited to the convenience of the majority without inflicting hardship on somebody. But this year it is Mr. E. B. Noel that undoubtedly has a grievance, though we have not the least reason to suppose him likely to complain of it. He had to play a severe game in the final of the singles with Mr. Howard—a game that he was really rather unlucky to lose, for he scored more points than the winner of the championship—and then had to go on almost immediately to take part in the final of the doubles with Mr. Baerlein against Mr. Dames-Longworth and Mr. V. Pennell. The latter pair won. Probably they would have won had Mr. Noel been in the freshest condition; but they would at least have had a harder task set them, and in any case it seems not quite right that a man should have to take part in a second final fight on the same afternoon on which he has already played an exhausting match.

One or two points mentioned at the late monthly meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society are worth emphasising—one, on the satisfactory side, in the form of decrease of foot-and-mouth disease; but, on the contrary and less agreeable side, there has been a steady increase in glanders during the past year, and recently a rerudescence of swine fever. To know the ills that are imminent is a very necessary condition to taking measures to guard against them, and the prevalence of these very catching ailments cannot be too widely recognised.

What the farmer has a right to ask from the State, in return for his heavy contributions thereto, is less harassing legislation and more help. It is all very well to leave private enterprise unfettered; but no private motive exists to move enterprise on so vast a scale as scientific enquiry and experiment for the general good of agriculture demand. It makes one ashamed of being English when one sees the generous, almost extravagant, system on which the American Government undertake the education of national industries. Their agricultural reports, for instance, even on such side issues as economic entomology or ornithology, are splendid volumes adorned with coloured plates such as would make them costly *éditions de luxe* in this country. We do not ask for these adornments, but for some evidence on the part of our Government of just a little of that parental fondness which impels the United States Government to lavish so much upon the national industries.

At Eastertide the present writer came upon the evidence of a sad little woodland tragedy that seems well worth recording. It was in the shape of a bird, the great tit, lying dead at a tree root, and the manner of its death was remarkable. Apparently it had driven its bill with too much energy into the seed of a hornbeam and could not extract it again. Pierced by the upper mandible, the seed was there still. It was removed with great difficulty, and is in the writer's possession now. The fate of the bird must have been horrible, as no doubt it was able to fly about for some time, being uninjured in any other way, but to eat or drink must have been impossible, so that death must have finally come from starvation. It is as pitiful a tale of bird life as has come before our eyes.

We earnestly hope that steps will be taken to secure that the Queen's Memorial is one worthy of the occasion, yet there is small ground for doing so. Money never yet of itself commanded genius, and at the present moment it will scarcely be denied that genius is very hard to come by in any department of English art. The only way to foster it is by giving a free opening to any young talent that may present itself, but this, as far as one can learn, is precisely what is not being done. It is stated that the committee have resolved to look at no designs save those of five selected artists. Now of the latter we wish to say nothing injurious, yet it would be idle to pretend that there is any chance of getting what we want by this method. The result promised is that yet another will be added to the smug conventional monuments that adorn London and the provincial towns. The committee ought not to be in too great a hurry. They ought to resolve to have a monument sufficiently artistic and beautiful to be worthy of the occasion, and to accept none till this demand is satisfied. A delay of two or three years need count for nothing in regard to a design meant for ages unborn.

The windows of the fruiterers' shops make a suggestion for intending colonists in South Africa. This is the worst quarter in the year from the point of view of the fruit supply. The sellers are trying to fill up the gap by importing choice fruit from Cape Colony, whence it can be shipped in time to reach this country in March and April. The plums, as big as a large peach and heart shaped, are the best. They are nectarine-flavoured, full of juice, and are selling at from eightpence to one shilling each. The smaller plums are also of extraordinary flavour. So are the pears, though the peaches are not so good.

The nectarines are first-class, as are the apricots. But they are all extravagantly dear, and the grapes, though of good flavour, are unthinned, badly packed, and just as the lazy Dutch farmers gather them in their vineyards. There would be an unlimited demand for the best classes of fruits properly packed. This seems a business which industrious Englishmen with a little knowledge of fruit growing might take up, though the disaffected Cape party are not likely to give the same kind of local encouragement to the settlers as they get in New South Wales or Queensland.

“SPEED THE PLOUGH.”

THE toast drunk at all the old-fashioned farmers' gatherings, and drunk in March ale or Brown October at the spring and autumn sowings, was that which forms the title of this article. March sees the last ploughing for the seed-bed of spring corn. March winds get the soil ready, crumbling all the ridges of the winter furrows, which frost and rain have already done their best to loosen and break up. Spring ploughing is a far more cheerful business, and lighter work than that of autumn and winter, because the land is dry. The early ploughings are often most laborious, as the men work steadily on, with driving showers beating on them, wetting their arms, that stretch out before them to hold the plough handles, with incessant streams of cold rain. Then the mud creeps up their legs to the knee, clogs the rope reins, and covers their fingers till, though not ragged and starved, they recall the picture of the ploughman five centuries ago—

“All be-slobbered in fen,
As he the plough followed.”

or, in modern phrase, “up to the ears in mud.” In his “Farmer's Year” Mr. Rider Haggard has more than one quietly appreciative passage commending the endurance of these toilers in the field on a wet, cheerless December day. “Let the eye roam where it would, there was but one cheerful thing at hand to catch it, the garlands of bright ivy clinging to the hedge-row pollards, and at times, in the thickest of the rain-storm, even these grew black. Then, to complete the picture patient and solemn, the ploughmen, wrapped in their thick capes, toiled



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THE BRIGHT SIDE OF LABOUR.

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forward side by side, heedless of the lashing sleet, heedless of the savage wind; up and down continually the grey length of the field, with the striving horses before them, and the complaining ploughs beneath their hands, very embodiment of the dignity and doom of labour.”

Pass we from this pensero of the plough to the allegro by the banks of the Clyde. Here is, indeed, a cheerful scene, embodying not the dignity and doom, but THE BRIGHT SIDE OF LABOUR. Supposing the reader knew how to manage the implement (an accomplishment rarer among the leisured class than any other form of outdoor work, for there are twenty gentlemen who can use a scythe for one who can work a plough), he would probably thoroughly enjoy a morning with the pair of Clydesdales, an iron grey, on this breezy upland.

It is nice, light, kindly soil, in perfect condition for working. So little sticky is it that the man in the foreground has not put his leggings on, but has just drawn his grey worsted socks over the ends of his trousers. The field is probably a bit of old rye grass which has been fed off, and is now being ploughed over and got into order for barley sowing, or perhaps to come in for a vegetable crop later, for all kinds of market farming go on in the district—strawberry growing and rhubarb culture, and there are plum and apple orchards.

As ploughing is probably the oldest agricultural process in the world, it is not to be expected that many great improvements should be discovered in the art now. But a considerable change has been made lately, by which cheaper tillage is secured. This consists in the



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ON THE HILLSIDE.

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use of what are called "digging ploughs." The furrow is considerably altered by using these implements, and the land does not need to be ploughed so often. It is not a great mystery, but one which needs a little previous explanation before it can be set forth in these pages.

The object of ploughing is to make a furrow, or rather to make the whole field a series of furrows, and, contrary to the general use of the word, in the art of ploughing the furrow does not mean the hollow groove which the plough makes, but the slice of earth which it cuts out of that groove turns over, and sets up at an angle. The plough coulter cuts straight down and makes one side of the furrow; the share, which runs perfectly flat on the ground, cuts the bottom side; the shiny, sloping earth board, which is now always made of steel, insinuates itself behind the plough share, and gently flaps the furrow of earth over, till it lies at right angles against the one just before cut.

If we could imagine soft bricks, much the shape of a brick but as long as the whole length of a field, laid regularly so that all their edges were askew, we should get the ideal furrows of a ploughed field. There is air in the hollow under them as well as on either side of the ridge above, and so frost, water, and air all help to crumble and refresh the exhausted earth. By the old way of ploughing these furrows of earth were cut hard, sharp, and solid, rather like real elongated bricks. The earth in them was rather pressed together than aided to separate by the plough.

The modern digging plough loosens the earth in the furrow besides turning it over, consequently it gets a shake up as the furrow is made, and if the ground is fairly light it pulverises much more quickly. When the soil is very heavy, as on the Essex clays, it has to be ploughed so that the water may



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

THE SEED-BED READY.

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run off. This is the so-called ridge and furrow, in which the word furrow is used in quite a different sense from the above. It then means the lowest hollow between the "lands," or sections, in which a field is ploughed; it is used to carry off water, and is either a drain itself or the hollow below which a subterranean drain runs. These "lands" have to be made exactly on the same ground every year, so that the furrow may lie over the subsoil drain.

One of the puzzles to the outsider when looking at a plough is that it usually has two wheels in front of quite different size, giving it a lopsided look. One of these, the largest, is called the furrow wheel; it regulates the depth of the cutting on the



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

IN THE ORCHARDS.

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furrow side, and also, with the coulter, regulates the width of the furrow which is cut from that bit of land which lies in the space parallel between the coulter knife and the big wheel. The small wheel, which is called the land wheel, runs on the uncut ground. When the spring seed-beds are being got ready, the ploughing needs to be done so as to break all the land up finely. In autumn and winter, when the land is going to lie for some months, this is not needed. Those awful rough ploughs, which people out shooting in autumn and winter occasionally have to stumble over, are meant to lie till spring, when they are ploughed again, broken up, and harrowed.

In the first picture the land is beautifully light, and needs no "laying up" into ridge and furrow. The implement in use is an ordinary plough, not a digging plough, and the shape of the furrow is very clearly seen owing to the curves of the field.

THE SEED-BED READY shows a charming scene where a corn-field runs right up to the edge of our little island. There are few other countries so fertile or so carefully cultivated that if one of Neptune's Tritons, swimming in on a high tide, reached his hand up over the seabank the first thing it would grasp would be an ear of wheat! At the particular moment when this photograph was taken it was one of the low spring tides, uncovering the rocks. Inland the "sower soweth the seed," throwing it broadcast from the linen bag slung around his neck. The girl stepping across to the old man brings a fresh supply of seed in the pail she carries. Behind, with the horses, is another elderly labourer, ready to drive the harrow behind the sower and harrow in the seed.

In IN THE ORCHARDS we look on quite a different process. This is the first and roughest winter ploughing done to break up the ground. The plough is set as deep as the two strong horses can drag it; this can be seen by noting the different levels on which the two horses stand, one being on the land side, the other walking in the hollow from which the last furrow was turned. The proper name for this last hollow is the "horse path." The picture shows exactly why it got the name. Oddly enough this is not an uncommon name for country villages. One lies just behind Shotover Hill, near Oxford. The size and roughness of the furrows turned out by the plough are well shown in the picture. As the land lies between and partly under trees it needs extra exposure to air and light.

The remaining, and prettiest, illustration shows work ON THE HILLSIDE, with the river flowing down the valley below. The

land is perhaps being got ready for strawberry growing, which will need a second and careful ploughing to carry in the fertilisers for this rather exacting crop.

OUR PORTRAIT ILLUSTRATION.

OUR frontispiece is adorned this week by the portrait of Mrs. Arthur Paget, who was formerly Miss Stevens, only daughter of Mr. Faran Stevens, of New York, and who is now the wife of Colonel Arthur Henry Paget, of the Scots Guards. Her husband has made himself famous by his connection with that section of the Imperial Yeomanry which bears his name. In addition to serving during the present war, Colonel Paget, who is the son of the late General Lord A. H. Paget, and therefore grandson of the first Marquess of Anglesey, has seen service in Ashanti, the Soudan, and Burmah. The town house of Colonel and Mrs. Arthur Paget is 35, Belgrave Square.

ON THE GREEN.

"GOLF ILLUSTRATED" has lately been very interesting with some illustrations taken from old Dutch pictures of the game of golf as played in the old days in Holland. The entire series of pictures has been interesting, but by far the most interesting is a picture taken from an illuminated "Book of Hours" that is now in the



OAK PERGOLA ABOVE DRY WALL FILLED WITH ALPINE PLANTS.

British Museum, and was made and illuminated in Bruges at a date that is estimated to have been from 1500 to 1520. This is a very early date of golfing picture; but that which gives the subject its peculiar interest is that the players—there seem to be three players and three balls, so that it appears to be a three-ball match—are obviously putting at a hole in the turf. It is the "golf as she is played" to-day. In most of these old Dutch pictures the putting is at a stake, and the whole game is commonly depicted on the ice—a jolly game, one can imagine, with a good stretch of ice for the immense length of drive that one can conceive as possible, but with a greater percentage of luck and uncertainty than would be likely to commend it to the tastes of a golfer living under the iron dispensation of the Rules of Golf Committee. But in this ancient picture the players putt at a hole in the turf, so that it is really modern golf; and the wonder is that they have left, as it seems, so barren a golfing literature while they have handed down not a few pictures in which golfing scenes are exhibited. This illuminated book of Bruges advances our knowledge of golfing history by a single stage only; but by a single stage it does advance it, and even that is something to be thankful for. The picture keeps its colour, in the original, so as to make it clear that the club-heads (each player seems to use but one club) are covered with steel (or is it that they played with Mr. Mills's aluminium-headed clubs?). For the putting—that is, the very short puts—they seem to have adopted the fashion of going down on one knee or on both knees, with the left hand held high up on the club shaft and the right very low down—almost on the place where the "whipping" ought to be. Perhaps it is an attitude that we may commend, with respect, to "Old Tom." It is for the shorter puts that it is to be recommended chiefly. Van der Neer was the artist who was especially fond of the ice-scene enlivened by the golfer, and one is surprised to see his people driving away into a throng of other skaters. No doubt they had prefaced the drive with a shout of "Fore!" or "Voor!" but even so, if the balls were as hard as the "gutty" of to-day, or even as the old feather balls that preceded gutta-percha, and were probably the Dutchmen's playthings, they must have dealt some of their friends shrewd blows. It was a harder age than ours,

The green-keeper has had good chances this year, and the Easter competitors have found all in its best order. The authorities at headquarters—St. Andrews, to wit—have taken rather an unusual course in shutting up the old classic links before the May meeting. No doubt this is part of a provident wisdom, for those time-honoured and time-worn links have some severe work in store for them. There is the spring meeting itself on the first of the month; and just a week later the amateur championship will be in full swing, champions probable and improbable "skelping" the turf with strokes clean and unclean, followed by the enormous regiment of spectators that churn up the bunkers into such a pleasant confusion of heel-taps for the reception of the ball. It is rather an early date for a big meeting in the East Neuk of Fife, in these days when our winters come in spring, or our springs are worse and more windy than our winters. Golf would be a better game could we find a less windy planet to play it on.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

ABOUT WATER GARDENS

ARDENING in England is changing its complexion. We may learn this truth from the series of "Gardens Old and New," from the many gardening articles that have appeared in these pages, and from recent works showing the better ways of planting the many flowers raised within the past few years. And the work about "Wall and Water Gardens," written by Miss Jekyll, and to appear almost immediately, will reveal a new world of flowers to those who know nothing of the many rare *nymphaeas* and other water-loving things to colour the surface of pond and lake, or even the prosaic tank.

A few generations ago the pearly white water-lily of the river and pond was almost the only *nymphaea* known to the planters of gardens. The beautiful species of other lands were forgotten, and the possibilities of water surface and bank dotted with flowers undreamt of, even by those who planted their pleasure grounds and woodland with consummate taste.

As this is the season to plant *nymphaeas*, a brief account of their great variety is opportune, and there is nothing difficult whatever in their management. A lake or large pond is necessary for the growth of the more robust forms, the beautiful *Marliacea* hybrids, *albida*, *rosea*, and the soft yellow *chromatella*, but the little *pygmæa* and its yellow variety *helvæola* may be grown in a small tub in the back garden of a suburban amateur.

The writer has enjoyed many visits to gardens in *nymphaea*-time, when the big flowers opened in hundreds in the midday sun and looked like glowing jewels upon the water surface—a fairy garden, restful and refreshing when the flowers in the borders hung their heads in the summer heat. A quiet, sheltered lake, free from swans and wildfowl and rats, is the place for the *nymphaeas*, but of course it is not always possible to "garden" under these pleasant conditions. Rats must, however, be suppressed, and swans are impossible; but the *nymphaeas* are wonderfully free from ailments, and make dashes of colour from quite early summer until the autumn. M. Latour-Marliac and others have raised this great race of modern hybrid flowers, and all the finer kinds are sold by our leading nurserymen, who frequently display them at the exhibitions in tubs to try to show something of those remarkable colours that charm one in the sunshine of a summer day. Many use the flowers for table decorations—bowls of floating *nymphaeas*, crimson-gold, white, yellow, and many strong and tender colours; and when a few groups are planted, frequent gatherings are possible throughout the summer.

We hope the hardy blue *nymphaea* is a reality, but so far *N. stellata* and *N. zanzibarensis* have proved too tender, except in tanks artificially warmed, and this, of course, is a source of greater expense than many care to incur. But *N. stellata* is as blue as the summer sky, so blue that we must not grudge the expense of warm water to coax out those glowing starry blossoms poised on long stems, which to gather for the house or as a gift to friends is a keen delight.

One illustration shows the beauty of the Japan iris grouped in water, and no flower is more precious for the streamside than this "flag" of many colours from the East.

One part of the forthcoming book will be devoted to wall gardens, that phase of English gardening which is unfolding fresh ways of using the hundred beautiful things that we only know in



THE JAPAN IRIS IN WATER.

the rock garden or in the border. The illustration of the oak pergola, with flowers in the wall, is an example of what we shall learn from this new work.

THE SOWER.

OLD AARON in his garden plot,
An ancient man and lean,
Jerked, moving slowly up the line,
"Tater"—a step—then "Bean."
Two things he planted one by one:
Potato first, then Bean.
So toiling up and down his plot
Went Aaron, old and lean.
His head was bent, his back was bowed,
He looked not on the scene;
But with a mind of vast intent
Wheezed hoarsely, "Tater—Bean."
Above, the sky was all a blue,
The fields around were green,
The birds poured music from the trees,
He answered, "Tater—Bean."
And so, for forty tardy years,
Like some well-planned machine,
This mortal on this spinning earth
Has planted "Tater—Bean."
And now his daughters nurse their babes,
Three sons died for their Queen;
But she who saw the garden dug
Still prides in "Tater—Bean."
So runs their life, these ancient twain,
Draws near the Great Unseen,
Soon, soon the little birds must miss
The solemn "Tater—Bean."
Soon, soon an alien foot will tread
The soil he loved to tend,
And I shall lose for all the years
My old, grey, patient friend.

God bless thee, honest Aaron!
And give unto thy hand,
In wider worlds and wider hours,
As dear a garden-land.

HAROLD BEGBIE.

TRANSPLANTING JOHN KNOX'S TREE.

FINLAYSTONE HOUSE is a hallowed spot to all who cherish the memory of John Knox. Under the tree on the famous lawn—the tree in process of disturbance—the great reformer and preacher, tradition records, dispensed the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to his devoted followers. And there is something more than mere tradition in this solemn celebration. We believe a picture in the

Edinburgh National Gallery depicts the famous preacher officiating in the dining-room of Finlaystone House, and maybe in the sunshine of summer he sought the grateful shade of the tree to speak to the faithful band of his mission and to dispense sacramental strength. At the time of John Knox, Finlaystone House was the seat of the Earl of Glencairn, and now is the property of Mr. G. F. Dickson, one of Glasgow's merchant princes. The Glencairns have played their part in the history of Scotland, and one of the Earls dared to encourage the great preacher, while the fourteenth Earl was a friend of Burns, who went visiting at Finlaystone House and scribbled on the glass of the library window, where the record now remains.

Finlaystone House is delightfully placed on the banks of the beautiful Clyde, with Dumbarton opposite, and no sweeter picture of river and hill exists for many miles around; but we are more concerned at

present with the famous tree than with the mansion. The tree, a yew, was unfortunately in the way of modern improvements, and has been safely transplanted to another part of the grounds, safe, we hope, from the vandals who in the past have hacked away shoots, and probably branches, either to trim the old tree into what they regarded as the correct shape, or as mementoes of John Knox. It cannot be accused of possessing great beauty now, but it is pleasant to reflect that men like Mr. Dickson cherish such trees as this, not merely for their own sake, but for their historical associations.

The lifting has been accomplished with consummate skill. At this we are not surprised, when we know that the work was undertaken by Mr. Barron, of Messrs. W. Barron and Son, Borrowash, Derby, upon whom the mantle of his famous father has certainly fallen. Those who know anything of the history of our great English gardens will remember that the late Mr. Barron lifted the famous trees at Elvaston, shifted to another part of the churchyard the Buckland yew, and left records of successful tree-lifting, too, in many parts of the British Isles.



SHOWING THE BULK OF ROOTS.

As the photographs reveal, this yew of John Knox was no mere stripling, but a heavy, cumbersome, and leafy tree, which without careful handling would have probably collapsed. It may interest those who have great estates to know how the work was accomplished. It consisted in first inserting three large baulks of timber beneath the ball of soil and roots, this ball to go intact to the desired position. Considerable excavation of soil was necessary, and a deeper mass of soil and roots would have been taken out, but in process of making an opening for the baulks, a sunken wall was discovered crossing beneath the tree at right angles to the line of its removal.

It was an arduous task to insert the baulks, the men



THE TREE ON ITS WAY.



IN ITS NEW HOME.

employed having to burrow almost rabbit fashion, loosening the soil in advance, and then scraping it out behind. When the baulks were in position the ball was completely detached from the surrounding soil and made ready for removal. Meanwhile, the trench along which the tree was to be dragged was being excavated. This finished, rollers were inserted under the baulks and planks laid down to ensure safe and easy removal of the heavy mass of roots and soil.

ANCIENT

BRIDGES.

"Now, when the Lords and Barons of the realm
Perceived Northumberland did lean to him,
The more and less came in with cap and knee;
Met him in boroughs, cities, villages,
Attended him on bridges, stood in lanes,
Laid gifts before him, proffer'd him their oaths."
—Hotspur, KING HENRY IV., Part I.

In a former article on ancient bridges it was suggested that few if any buildings in this country, except the cathedrals and parish churches, are as old as the bridges, or as well built. Of structures made for practical use in the business of life, none exist which can compare with them for length and continuity of service. Hotspur's speech quoted above shows that the bridge was the regular place at which to await



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ANCIENT HOUSES ON ELVET BRIDGE.

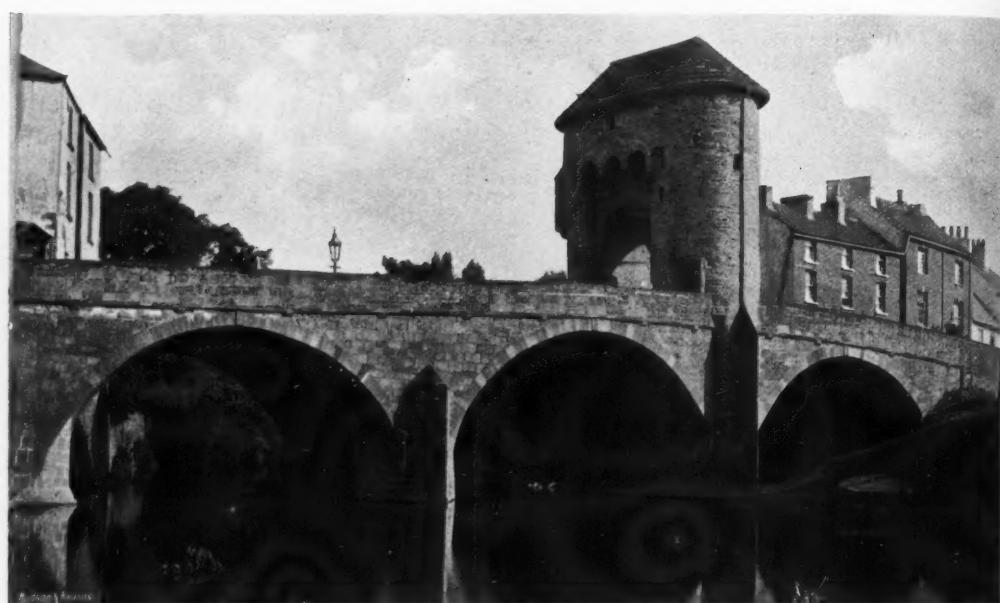
Dundee.

Scotch, should stand first in our notes on this congenial topic. The Earl of Northumberland and the Bishop of Durham were the joint guardians of the north-east frontier. Properly speaking, the Bishop was the higher of the two great powers, for he was Earl of the County Palatine, and held this feudal power conjointly with the ecclesiastical one. Also he disposed of 20,000 men. But in the defence of England Newcastle was the first bulwark

against the Scots, and the Tyne had to be crossed before the Wear. Over the Wear the Bishop of Durham built the bridge which still stands sound and strong; and on the hill his soldiers held the castle, to block the crossing when need be. "The towne selfe of Duresme stondith on a rocky hille," says Leland, "and stondith as men come from the south cuntry on the ripe of Were, the which water so with his course naturell in a botom windeth about, that from Elvet, a great stone bridge of fourteen arches, it crepeth about the towne to Trainegate, a bridge of three arches, also on Were, that between these two bridges, or a little lower at St. Nicholas, the towne, except the length of an arrowshot, is built *in insula*." The measure of distance, "an arrowshot," and the bit of Latin, a reminiscence of the language of Domesday, are rather quaint survivals. Elvet Bridge was the second of the Bishops' bridges. The first was Barnwell Gate Bridge, built in 1120 by Ranulph Flambard. Elvet was erected by Bishop Pudsey in 1170, but was widened and altered later, and the number of arches on the landing-places reduced or blocked. The ANCIENT HOUSES ON ELVET BRIDGE are of late growth compared with the date of the structure; but it is pretty clear from the corbeling out of the old masonry that a bridge-house or gateway of some kind stood there originally. THE BRIDGE GATE AT MONMOUTH is an extremely interesting survival of what was probably the regular type of bridge into a fortified town.

Visitors to the famous little town of Moret, near the forest of Fontainebleau, will remember its long bridge over the Seine and the gate flanked by two towers where it enters the town walls. Monnow Bridge has its fortress on the pier between the first and second arches. The main gateway was defended by two narrow flanking juts of the wall, and three projecting arches through which boiling water or arrows could be used against anyone attacking the door. There is also a side postern which could be used when the main gate was shut after sunset.

This was a secular building, nor did the religious houses play as great a part in the making of roads and bridges as they did in other engineering feats. The monk was by intention a home-staying species, not a traveller. Consequently he built, farmed, and gardened zealously, but was not a road-maker or a "pontifex." But when, as was often the case, the abbey or priory stood on a river, the monks either built or repaired the



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THE BRIDGE GATE AT MONMOUTH.

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bridge for the use of persons coming to and from the abbey, and several particularly neat pieces of work of theirs still survive. At Beaulieu, in the New Forest, for instance, they made a combined bridge and dam across the river just opposite the abbey. The dam was made by a solid causeway, in the middle of which the bridge was pierced. Above it they ponded back the river into a ten-acre lake, which is there still, and was a great store of fish. The leet from this lake also turned the abbey mill, which is now removed and set on the causeway, but formerly stood close to the gatehouse which is now the entrance to Lord Montagu's garden. A far more puzzling and very well known bridge built by monks is that at Croyland, in the Lincolnshire Fen.

The famous old abbey there was a kind of pioneer and outpost of the earliest fen reclamation. Later and more extensive drainage seaward has drawn away the waters around, and made what was probably in the early Middle Ages a marshy "polder" full of rivulets into sound ground. The old stone footbridge now stands in the centre of the old town, in a wide space where no trace of water or stream remains. It has a ground plan like the letter Y. Under the stalk of the Y is half of a fine Gothic arch, and under each of the two arms of the letter is a similar arch askew. Two possible explanations of this arrangement have been suggested. The bridge, which was made for foot passengers and perhaps for pack-horses only, may have been built at the junction of two streams; or there may have been a path by the side of the main stream, and parallel with it, on to which the branch paths descended. The facts seem to favour both ideas. The building was completed by an abbot of Croyland in the year 1380 or thereabouts, when a branch from the main stream of the river Welland ran through the village, and divided here into two smaller water-courses. Three piers were built at the angles of a triangle, and from each three half-arches rose and met in the middle. Under the boss was the centre where the stream divided; three streams passed under the three arches, and three roads branched off from the centre of the bridge above. In 1854 the streams passing under were turned into sewers and arched over, and the bridge is now waterless. It is called the TRINITY BRIDGE OF CROYLAND. The stone figure with a crown sitting by the side of the bridge has been thought to be meant for Christ sitting by the Well of Samaria. More probably it is some patron saint of the abbey or of travellers. Another Eastern Abbey built a bridge perhaps more ambitious in its architecture than



J. Valentine and Sons, Ltd. THE ABBOT'S BRIDGE, BURY ST. EDMUNDS.

Dundee.

any other of the Gothic type in England. The monks of Bury St. Edmunds were wealthy and industrious; but this bridge was clearly meant to be an embellishment to their splendid abbey rather than a mere work of utility. It is far more considerable than the size of the little river required, and its architecture was meant to match that of the abbey or the general lines on which great churches were built. The river was small, and the current slow. Consequently there was no need to make the strong rectangular spurs on the piers seen in almost all bridges, early and late. Stone was also scarce, so they built the side walls and parapets of their bridge of flint stones, the universal building material of churches in Suffolk. This does not make a strong wall against an outward thrust, and the weight of the roadway tended to squeeze the walls outward. To

henge. They are called "Celtic bridges." But as Dartmoor and Devon were the land of the West Welsh till a very late date, this phrase conveys no definite meaning except a taste of rude antiquity. There is one on the Cowsick, right up in the moor, where the last trees merge into heather and stone. This is made by long granite slabs laid on piers made in a most curious fashion. The writer believes them to be much later than the top stones. The lower part of each is a round rock like an inverted pudding-pot; on this lies another like a Cheshire cheese; and on that a lot of compound stonework on which the stone beams rest. At Postbridge, on Dartmoor, there is another Celtic bridge, over a larger stream. This is a trilithon bridge, and might well be compared with undoubtedly Celtic remains. Three stones bridge the whole river. These lie on piers of large blocks piled like bricks one on another. Above lies an ugly modern road-bridge of very poor design, which has practically superseded the other even for foot passengers. The "Celts," or evidently good steady heads for

Dundee



J. Valentine and Sons, Ltd. OLD BRIDGE ON THE COWSICK, DARTMOOR.

Dundee



J. Valentine and Sons, Ltd. TRINITY BRIDGE OF CROYLAND.

Dundee

stop this they built against the bridge *flying buttresses*, with the arch springing from a lower buttress on the spur. The whole arrangement has a thoroughly ecclesiastical look. This is an exception to the great family likeness among most of the early stone bridges, as well as the late ones, caused by the absolute sameness of the work they were intended for, and the material used. But there are a few districts in which landscape, stone, and bridges are absolutely unlike anything of the kind elsewhere, and the latter are as strange as the birch-rope suspensions—we cannot call them bridges—of Cashmire. These are seen on Dartmoor. There the local granite lies about in long flat slabs on the moor, sometimes in such quantity that the stones are called "grey wethers." From these slabs were built some bridges so old that they may well have been standing in the days of the Druids and of the men who built Stone-

whoever built the old one, had there is no sign of a handrail.

C. J. CORNISH.



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CELTIC BRIDGE AT POSTBRIDGE.

Dundee

THE OLD SCHOOL NATURALISTS.

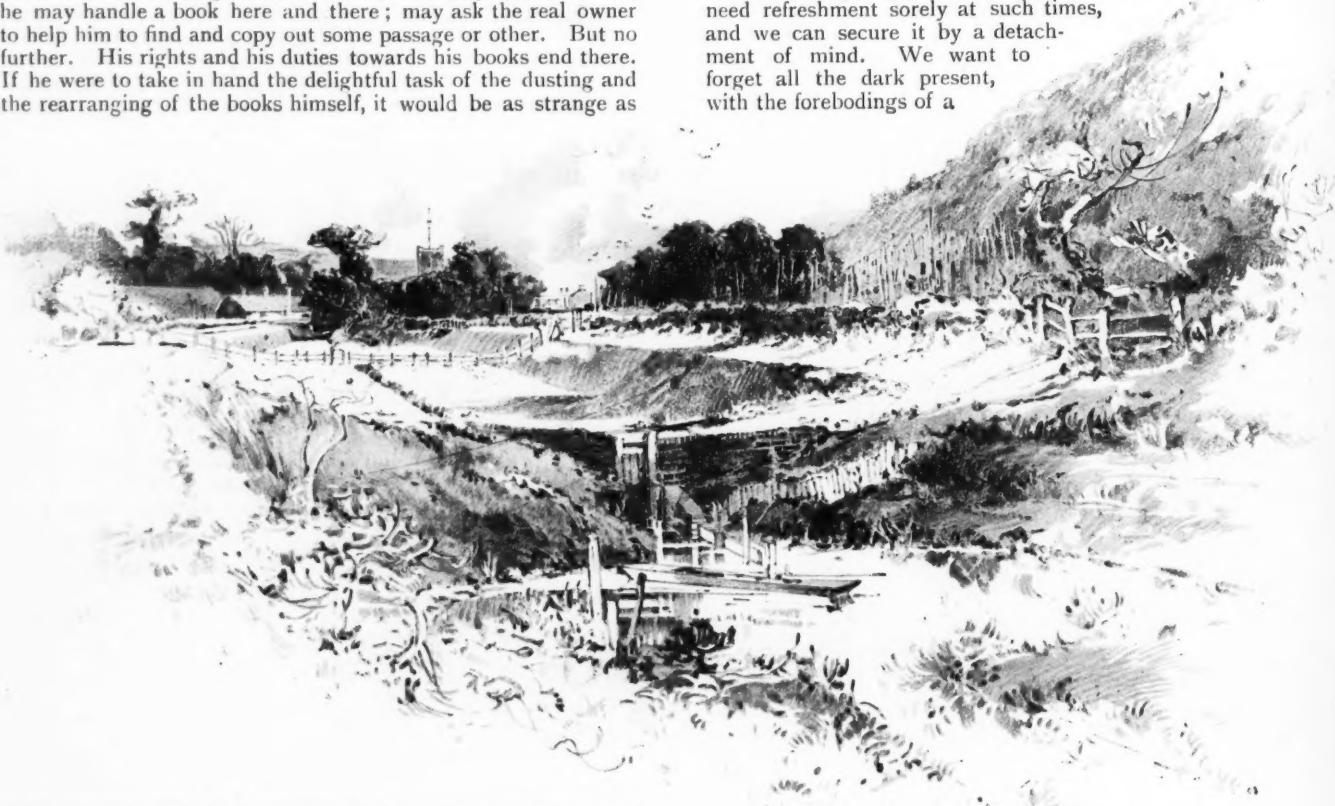
I.—WHITE OF SELBORNE.

THREE is an art in the nice disposition of books. Some people grow so rich in books by the outlay of large sums of money year after year, that in the end they come to need the services of a librarian to arrange and catalogue these for them. Others have inherited so many books, that it would be regarded by the world as quite improper for them, as persons of vast possessions and high station, to do without a librarian. So they engage a kind of literary valet, a gentleman's gentleman, and forthwith hand over to him the care of all their choice and rare volumes. One feels for a man so circumstanced. It is as though he gave over the care and education of his children to some safe and genteel person, only now and then going to see them in a formal sort of manner, to pat them perhaps on the head, compliment their guardian on the progress made by his pupils, and then be bowed out.

The wealthy man may now and then go into his library—or the library which passes for his—and hear from its real master, who is his alleged servant, about the state of the collection, additions, new bindings, alterations in the catalogue, and the like; he may handle a book here and there; may ask the real owner to help him to find and copy out some passage or other. But no further. His rights and his duties towards his books end there. If he were to take in hand the delightful task of the dusting and the rearranging of the books himself, it would be as strange as

these men. True, one dips into them at all sorts of times. I once read Walton's "Lives"—though not for the first time—when in the underground railway, for a few minutes night after night, on my way to a newspaper office to write things they call "leaders" on all manner of unnatural historical subjects. I often stop to rummage among the "all in this lot sixpence" boxes, till I light on a Jesse, or an Aiken, or a Waterton—but he is rare at sixpence—and read him then and there, till I begin to think the owner of the book store is growing impatient; and sometimes when engaged in prosaic but pressing work in the morning, I get up from the writing-table and draw forth a White or Walton and read him for a quarter of an hour, and then return to my task somewhat refreshed.

Refreshment—that is the right word to express what one gets by reading Gilbert White's "Selborne." It is good to turn to "Selborne" when one's spirits flag after a struggle through the rough bits that are so frequent on the road of life—much more frequent I believe for those who on the whole, thanks to that almost grandest of God's gifts, enthusiasm, greatly enjoy the journey. We need refreshment sorely at such times, and we can secure it by a detachment of mind. We want to forget all the dark present, with the forebodings of a



if he were to take his coat out of the ordinary valet's hands and brush it, or to unpack his own trunk and lay out the dress suit, white tie, and clean shirt on the bed against the dressing hour. Poor man; how very ridiculous the possession of great wealth does make him seem! He cannot even enjoy properly his own books. He can no more manage his own library than he can load his own gun, or find his own game. He moves among his books a splendid stranger.

But we who have only a few books can enjoy them to our heart's delight. If the housemaid unduly moves them, we can and will make a great to-do, complain to the mistress of our household, and vow we won't have it. We can and we shall arrange the books just as we like, and, as I say, there is an art in the nice disposition of these friends of ours. Some books you may like to have on the small shelf close to your bed—these are nightcap books. Then there are fireside books. It is good after dinner or supper on a quiet night to drop into the armchair close to the fire, and from that coign of vantage, without the least exertion, be able to pull out two or three favourites just to dip and dip into. Here a row of poets, above these the stories of Scott and Jane Austen and George Eliot, and above them again, on the shelf reached most easily of all, a dozen volumes written by the old-time naturalists and country life authors. When the fire burns bright and the pipe is alight and the ticking of the old grandfather clock is the sole sound that breaks the silence of the evening—I love a grandfather clock; time never seems to hurry while he tick, ticks—that is the hour to reach out and take down White, Jesse, Jenyns, Howitt, or one or two others of the school I am going to try to write of. You must have an hour or two of real leisure to enjoy thoroughly

The Fish Pond.

still greater darkness in the future, and that black precipice at the end of it all which *will* come in front of us. Now Gilbert White was detachment. Somebody has suggested that he was "Old Leisure." I think he was even more Old Detachment. One of my favourite books is Carlyle's "French Revolution," that brilliant commentary of a period which even to-day, though it belongs to a century that is not even next to ours, casts a wizard's spell over us. I have sometimes read the history of the French Revolution and the history of Selborne on the same day, and nothing could serve better to emphasise in one's mind this gift or power of detachment possessed by White than setting side by side some of the dates pertaining to both histories.

On July 14th, 1789, the Bastille fell; by August 27th, 1789, every particular respecting that world-moving event had reached England and astounded the civilised world. But look at these dates in this history of Selborne. White was then busy with his fern owls, which "showed off in a very unusual and entertaining manner, by hawking round and round the circumference of my great spreading oak for twenty times following." And this is only one instance out of many that might be given. I suspect that little Jane Austen, aged fourteen, living at the time fifteen or twenty miles off in the remote village of Steventon, Hants, was more perturbed by the fall of the Bastille than Gilbert White—though a sweet serenity



Selborne

and bugs, without an idea beyond in his head." I am afraid that among those who have heard of White, but not read him, or at any rate not read intelligently, some such notion prevails. Just "a still quiet body; there wasn't a bit of harm in him, I'll assure, ye, sir; there wasn't indeed." Such was the picture of White drawn by a village dame in the last century who had actually seen and, in her limited way, known the man; and some such view of White is, I suppose, taken to this day by the average person who has glanced at "Selborne," and feels qualified to speak of its author as a good simple old gentleman contented with a country parson's quiet life.

Assuredly White was quiet, contented, harmless; I am not quite so sure about the simplicity—as to what exactly is meant by that. But, as I shall hope to show by some quotations in a future paper, White was a great deal more than the amiable, rather doddering old gentleman some people persist in picturing him.

In the first place, White was essentially a man of letters, if I may be allowed to use that term instead of the detestable Frenchism *littérateur*. His language is not the language which men of letters use to-day. It is what might be called old-fashioned; it is most precise; to some it may seem cramped. White wrote in a way we should be



The Wakes from Gardens

Robert Daines
1772

shy of writing to-day; he would possibly—though I could not give an instance of this—have said "residence" where we should say "house"; his restart "affects neighbourhoods"; his spotted fly-catchers do not "go away early" or "leave England early," they "retire early"; he is interested in the question of whether the ring ouzels "continue resident" (not "stay") in the cold parts (or rather "regions") of England through the winter. As I say, we might be shy of using words and phrases such as White used, but we may claim for White what we can claim for few members of his school, namely, style. White had style as surely as Walton had it a hundred years before, and Richard Jefferies a hundred years after him. I do not believe any man can acquire style by labour in writing and correcting; its germs must be in him from the start. If anyone doubts White had style, let him read the letter to Daines Barrington of April 12th, 1772—the delicious tortoise letter—or the picture, in the letter to Pennant of

was so characteristic of her life too. "Oh, but," I hear some superior person scoff out, "Gilbert White was a fossil; an old sleepy-head maunding about the woods and fields all day, chronicling small beer about the tortoise (as slow as its master) and birds and beasts

September 2nd, 1774, of the blackcap singing, and be converted. Style or distinction was White's indeed.

It is just as sure that White had a keen sense of humour. The tortoise letter by itself would prove that. Here and there throughout the entire correspondence with Pennant and Barrington this humour of White's keeps peeping out, and it is not absent in the letters addressed to Mr. Robert Marsham between August, 1790, and June 15th, 1793. This little series of letters was only discovered about a quarter of a century ago, and was made public by the Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society. It appeared for the first time in Mr. Harting's edition of "Selborne," published by Messrs. Bickers in 1876, and, I believe, in the Frank Buckland and Lord Selborne edition published by Messrs. Macmillan also in 1876. The letters do not appear in either of the large editions published in 1900 and

1901. Perhaps they are forbidden ground. It is scarcely worth while to make immense efforts to get for your new edition a picture of your author's walking stick, or the poker with which he is believed to have stirred his fire; but the ten letters to Mr. Marsham in the 1876 edition, and the garden calendar in the latest edition of all—completed only the other day—were indeed worth adding to the "Natural History of Selborne," for they throw no little light on the man himself. By means of them we have been able to add a few fresh touches to the portrait

of White which each of us has for himself painted long since.

The last of the Marsham letters is dated "Selborne, June 15th, 1793," less than a fortnight before the death of White at the age of 73. In that letter he speaks well of one of Arthur Young's works, but in one or two previous letters he enquires about Young as if not quite satisfied as to his respectability. "You have not told me anything about Arthur Young. You cannot abhor the dangerous doctrines of levellers and republicans more than I do."

"I was born and bred a gentleman, and hope I will be allowed to die such," and he goes on to contrast "our (i.e., our Selborne) common people" favourably with the Jacobin-inclined masses in factious manufacturing towns. There flashed forth something much more like the spirit of the



old governing class than of the simple quiet body White is often represented as. It might have been the honest, honourable boast of a fine old English gentleman in the hall of his ancestors: one respects him for it. What can be more unreasonable than to look askance at a man because he is proud of the fact that he comes from a good stock? You may feel proud of the glorious past of your country—you must not of the glorious past of your family! There was evidently no false humility about White, and if his ancestors had fought and died noble deaths for their country, their convictions, or their king, he would have gloried in it. I think he would have found leisure, amidst his natural history and gardening and antiquities and clerical work, to devote to many a page of deeply interesting family history. It would, probably, have been a model for all time, for whatever he touched he adorned.

GEORGE A. B. DEWAR.

[The illustrations that go with this article are taken, by kind permission of the publishers, from Messrs. Freemantle's new and superb edition of "The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne." This without doubt is the "Selborne." E1.]

"CAST UP BY THE SEA."

WHEN men speak of the treasures of the deep, they imply that the ocean is a guardian of its wealth, and personify the sea as a greedy and unscrupulous tyrant, gathering to itself the goods of others, and keeping to itself the goods that are its own. It would be juster metaphor to say that the sea is like some gigantic savage, who "shakes brainlessly convulsed, and sightless stares," keeping or destroying as the mood takes it, and heaping together for preservation things worthless and things precious, things from near and things from far, like a maniac setting out the gatherings of his aimless destroying fingers. There is a contrast between the orderly arrangement by the sea of what it has made its own, and the shatter made of connected ideas by its mechanical shaking up of the order of the world as thinking man arranges it, which represents in the concrete the true idea of chaos, the triumph of matter over mind.

On the great shingle beaches, by the tide mark, the treasures and dust, the sticks and the straw, lie side by side, ocean record of years of sea history, which he who likes may read and decipher. These are the scattered leaves of Neptune's log-book, piled almost into connected volumes wherever the sea has laid up the greatest banks of shingle and scattered on them the thickest fringe of the flotsam and jetsam of the deep. It is always worth while, after the great storms, to go down to the winter shore and read the latest intelligence from Neptune's diary, in which all events, tragic, historical, and utterly trivial, even vulgar, are entered, with no censor to say no! Here is the plain story of the sea, as read on the mighty shingle bank at the foot of the lighthouse on Orford Ness. The storm at the New Year had given the sea-front a fresh raking down, and scattered along the margin for mile after mile the litter of the sea. Right at the foot of the lighthouse it had laid a piece of treasure, part of a cargo of bullion lost by Charles XII. of Sweden, 189 years ago, off this same shingle bank. The King wanted to pay his soldiers, and to pay them in copper. So he filled a ship with square plates of the finest Swedish copper, and stamped each at the four corners with his own royal monogram and the date, and in the middle "4 thalers" or "2 thalers," which was the amount each plate was to be coined into or sold for. Probably the money was safer in this form than as coin. But the ship was wrecked on our coast, and the money which was to pay our enemies' troops—for Charles was entering a coalition against England—was buried off Orford Ness. There, year after year, a few of the plates of copper are cast up by the sea, and the last arrived on New Year's Day. It was a beautiful object, too, for the sea, while not injuring its shape, had bitten a pattern on its face, and filled this up with an inlay of the most vivid green, Neptune's stamp being mixed with the monogram of the "last of the Vikings." For unnumbered ages the Esquimaux of the Arctic circle, far beyond the limit of trees, have made their snow-shoes and sledges, their boats and spear-handles, from the drift wood of the Gulf Stream. Here, on the Suffolk shore, lay enough drift wood, yard by yard, to cook the meal of a boat's crew at every ten paces. The sea had rasped, smoothed, and whitened the boughs and branches, and scoured and sand-papered the planks and billets like the deal top of a kitchen table. There was wood of all kinds and countries, teak from broken ships, and mahogany from their fittings; Jarrah wood blocks, meant for paving the streets, now strewing the shore; wrinkled branches of furze, torn by flooded rivers from their banks; and branches of Scotch fir, twisted and whitened, blown from their parent trees on the inland heaths by winter gales. There were broken oars, and sticks from either end of which hung the fishermen's hooks, a flag pole, bamboos great and small, staves of casks, leaves of maize, and of tropical fibre plants already half

made ready by steeping in the sea for the final separation of the strings, and other possible fuel of a different sort. Lumps of coal lay everywhere, all rounded and smooth, but good for burning still, and a yet more curious fuel, torn from the bottom of the sea; for off this coast there lies a submerged forest, and between the trunks of the prehistoric trees lie beds of primeval peat. After the storms this brown peat is torn up and flung upon the shore. You can cut it with a knife like plug tobacco, and set the great oval blocks to dry, when it will burn as brightly as the turfs in a highland bothy, although it has lain under the sea for perhaps ten thousand years. By the turf and the coal lay a piece of rough amber, another relic of the drowned and forgotten forest, and a fragment of one of its trees. Over all was scattered the rubbish of ocean and the leavings of men, the stuff cast from ships, knots and lengths of rope, blocks from rigging, wire and chains, twine, bits of tarred canvas, straw bottle-cases, bones of oxen, blocks of deal, and a store of boots and shoes. Sailors are not particular about shoes. Anything will do, as long as it will keep on, and here were their cast-off footgear, with all the sewing washed white by the sea, and the laces of ship's cord and lanyard which the untidy sailor men put into them all white and clean too. There were cricketing shoes, but a sailor had worn them, for there was the tell-tale string; and nailed boots, with the same sea mark; and another in which the string had been cut all the way up by a knife. That was the boot of a man struggling for his life, which he had drawn up and cut the strings of with the knife that hung on his breast as he swam. There, too, were the shoes of children, which we will hope the little dears had thrown overboard to make ships of, and had not lost when they themselves were in the sea. All these and many more goods and gear were laid most tidily and in order, mile after mile, for the sea is one of the neatest displayers of wares. But not many years ago it made this same shingle bank the most shockingly untidy and generally squalid piece of shore round old England. It wrecked off the bank a ship with a cargo of 20,000 gin bottles, all of white glass, going to Schiedam to be filled. The great pity of it was that the ship met with this misfortune on the way out, and not when returning, which, as the fisherman said, was a pity indeed for though the Dutch are no friends to this country, we should have liked to have drunk their healths gratis. Others said that this was a manifest evidence that Providence is always on the side of the teetotalers, and there the controversy ended, but the bottles did not. Four miles of broken gin bottles fringed the Suffolk shore, and turned the brown pebbles green, and it took the sea nearly a twelvemonth to break them up and grind down all the smashed bits into beautiful greenish rounded pebbles of "aqua marine."

If anyone wishes to see for himself, or herself, what is the present state of Orford beach and make a fresh inventory, they have only to go to the Crown and Castle under Roger de Glanville's ancient keep, where, if they have no particular luck among the flotsam and jetsam across Orford Ness, undeniable treasures of the deep, in the shape of fresh oysters from the river, fish from the same, and wildfowl of all kinds from Iken Decoy in due season, may make some practical amends.



IN THE GARDEN

TO KEEP DOWN INSECT FOES.

AT this season of the year insect foes make themselves obnoxious. They are returning to vigorous life, and as so much may be accomplished in keeping them down by simple methods, a few notes at the present moment will be helpful. Insect pests usually attack things in ill-health, and therefore it is of the greatest importance to keep the plant or crop as vigorous as possible. Seedlings should be pushed into strong growth as quickly as is consistent with health, as the smaller a plant is the more serious the attack of any pest. It is possible to avoid it, the same kind of plant should not be grown on the same ground in two successive seasons, for frequently the pest that has injured the first crop is in some form hibernating in the soil, or somewhere handy, so that as soon as the second makes its appearance it is ready to attack it. When plants that have been infested by some insect or fungus have borne their crop, so that they are of no further use, they should be at once removed and burnt; it is useless to throw them on the rubbish heap as is so frequently done, as in most cases that will not kill the pests.

EVILS OF RUBBISH HEAPS.

We much question the value of rubbish heaps at any time. The decaying matter that they eventually contain is no doubt useful as manure; but how often, when the contents of a heap are thrown on land for that purpose, the seeds of various weeds, the spores of fungi, and many kinds of grubs, millipedes, and other pests, are distributed broadcast at the same time. The proper way is to burn everything in the nature of rubbish in a garden as soon as a considerable quantity has accumulated. A blazing fire is not necessary, but one that will burn

slowly so as to result in a considerable amount of valuable ashes. When plants or trees that have been attacked by any pest are being pruned or cut back, carefully collect and burn the pieces cut off, as they may be infested with the eggs or spores. It is a great mistake to allow rubbish, stones, and such-like to remain about, as they only afford shelter to many insect pests. One has only to turn such things over to see what a number of different insects, slugs, etc., may be found beneath. An untidy weedy corner is a nursery for all kinds of pests, which breed there unmolested, and from which they spread all over the place. Weeds are a costly crop to grow; they impoverish the soil by taking from it valuable nourishment for the crop, and if on ground that is being fallowed, they provide food for pests which otherwise would be starved, and so a great part of the value of fallowing the soil is lost.

IMPORTANCE OF QUICK ACTION.

If the old proverb is ever true, that "A stitch in time saves nine," it is certainly the case in destroying injurious insects the moment their presence is detected, for the rapidity with which they increase in many cases is astounding.

THE APHIDES

probably breed more rapidly than any insects, frequently bringing forth their young alive (unlike most insects, which usually lay eggs). The writer watched one under a microscope. It gave birth to two within half-an-hour, and they would probably in the course of two or three days begin to breed. They multiply so fast that Professor Huxley calculated that the tenth generation from a single aphis would be heavier than 500,000,000 stout men. It is of great importance that means should be at once taken to destroy pests the moment they make their appearance, and that they should be looked for, instead of waiting until their presence means action. Insects undergo certain changes in their appearance and habits, commonly known as transformations or metamorphoses. A butterfly or moth, for example, lays eggs which result in caterpillars; these feed voraciously and grow rapidly. When full grown they turn into chrysalides from which emerge the butterflies. Beetles, bees, and flies also lay eggs, from which are hatched grubs or maggots, and which in due course become chrysalides, and later perfect insects—beetles, bees, or flies. Some other insects—grasshoppers, plant bugs, earwigs, etc.—also lay eggs, but the young which come from them are like the parent insect, only much smaller and wingless. They grow, but instead of becoming chrysalides are at last furnished with the rudiments of wings, and then, changing their skins, appear as perfect insects. When an insect has once attained the perfect state it never grows. A small butterfly never becomes a large one, nor does a small beetle, bee, or fly develop. Some insects are injurious only in their caterpillar or grub state—butterflies, moths, flies, for instance; others in the perfect state as well, viz., beetles, grasshoppers, aphides, thrips. Insects may be divided into two kinds—those that bite and gnaw and those that suck, beetles, grasshoppers, bees, and earwigs being among those that have biting mouths both in their immature and perfect states. Plant bugs, aphides, and scale insects have sucking mouths in both states, while butterflies, moths, and flies, in their perfect condition, also have similar mouths, but as caterpillars or grubs their mouths are furnished with jaws or sharp hooks with which they can obtain their food. These points should always be remembered when trying to destroy an insect; it is useless to try to poison green fly, scale insects, or plant bugs, which suck out the juices of plants, but the biting insects can be killed by poisoning their food.

COLD PLANT HOUSES IN WINTER AND SPRING.

The cold plant house is an important adjunct to the garden. Its true value is not appreciated, for many who cannot afford the luxury of an artificially heated structure can maintain with comfort a cold greenhouse, where may be grown many beautiful things, some quite hardy, and others that only need protection from frost and keen north and easterly winds. In a letter written us recently, some excellent remarks are made about cold plant houses. The writer says: "I am convinced that many garden-lovers possess unheated glass-

houses, and obtain keen pleasure from them during summer, but not in winter. These cold structures may be made ornamental and interesting throughout the year when the right things are grown, while many beautiful bulbous things, plants, and shrubs may be grown for the house, and these will stand draughts better than those from a heated structure. The following dwarf shrubs are satisfactory: Jasminum nudiflorum, which must be cut back hard after flowering, when grown in a pot; Laurustinus; Rhododendrons, such as Early Gem, Nobleanum, and other early-flowering kinds; Skimmia japonica, which is brilliantly-coloured berries; Azalea mollis, Staphylea colchica, Andromeda floribunda, the sweet-scented Mezereon (*Daphne Mezereum*), Moutan, or tree Peonies, double-flowered Plum (*Prunus sinensis* fl.-pl.), and a host of Almonds, *Prunus triloba* and others, and double-flowered Cherry. Mention must be made of many border plants, such as *Iberis gibraltarica*, and *Garrexiana*, Alpine Wall-flowers (*Cheiranthus Marshalli* and *alpina*), East Lothian Stocks, Christmas Roses, Alpine Primulas, *Saxifraga burseriana*, *Chionodoxa*, *Scilla*, Dog's-tooth Violets, Lyre-flower (*Dielytra spectabilis*), hardy *Cyclamen*, and, of course, *Chrysanthemums*." An almost unlimited number of plants may be grown in this house without a failure. The things mentioned comprise merely a few of the better known for this purpose, as all who have visited any of the recent meetings of the Royal Horticultural Society in the Drill Hall, Westminster, will testify. The beautiful groups of early-flowering shrubs have been brought to

perfection with very little warmth, and a host of early-flowering Irises, *I. reticulata*, *I. bakeriana*, and *I. Danfordiae*, Snowdrops, Winter Aconites, *Saxifraga*, especially the brilliant little *S. oppositifolia* and its varieties, and *Shortia galacifolia*, may be grown also. This subject has been alluded to before in COUNTRY LIFE, but is by no means exhausted. It will be interesting to hear from anyone who has made a conspicuous success of the quite cold house.

PRUNUS DAVIDIANA ALBA.

This is an Almond (*Amygdalus*), but the Almond family is now grouped with the Prunuses; hence the name. This is a charming shrub, the very earliest in bloom, the long shoots being white with flowers before February is over. A group of it is pleasant to see on a mild February day, as a foretaste of spring.

A NOBLE HARDY PLANT.

Our illustration needs few words. *Crambe cordifolia* is there seen in its full beauty of leaf and flower, the whole thrown into bold relief by a background of Pine and woodland. Many gardeners—we use the word in its broadest sense—have never heard of a plant so noble and picturesque in growth, as easily grown as Rhubarb, perfectly hardy, and exactly fitting in in certain parts of the pleasure grounds or some woodland edge such as here depicted. The plant must stand alone, unfettered by neighbouring things, and reveal its leafage and spreading masses of tiny white flowers, like foam dashed upon the shore, a fleecy



J. T. Newman.

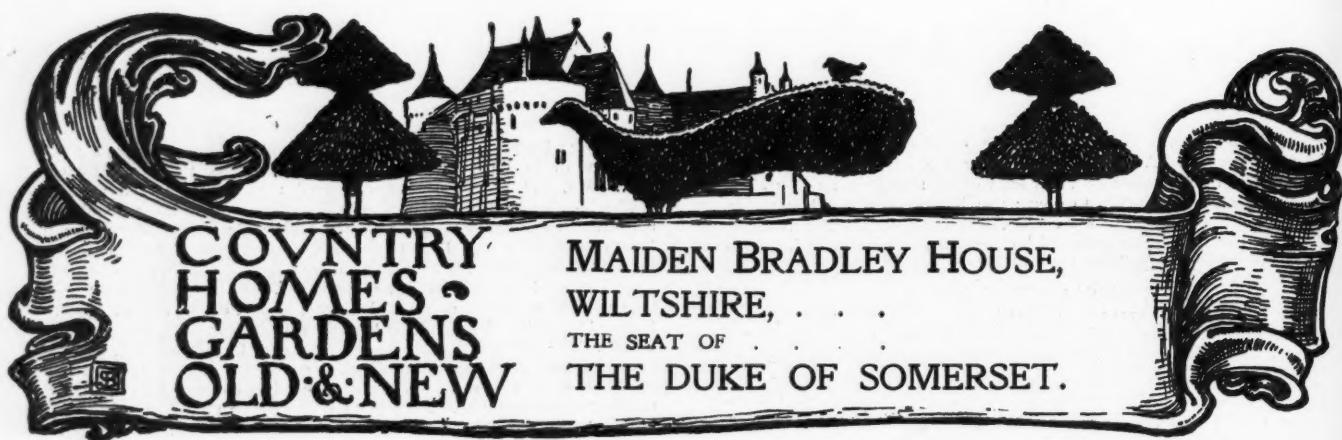
CRAMBE CORDIFOLIA ON EDGE OF WOODLAND.

Copyright.

cloudy effect, so beautiful and satisfying, which those who know not of these fine-leaved plants cannot produce with anything else. There are many such spots in gardens, and the *Crambe* is a change from the big-leaved *Polygonums*, *Rheums*, and *Gunneras*.

THE MEXICAN ORANGE-FLOWER (*CHOISYA TERNATA*) AS A SCREEN.

A Surrey flower-gardener writes: "The merits of the Mexican Orange-flower as an evergreen shrub have always been fully recognised by plant-lovers, although even now it is seldom found in the majority of gardens. I should like, however, to call attention to its value as a fast-growing screen for railings or trellis-work where such screens are required. Two years last autumn I wanted something to furnish a stretch of trellis-work, 6ft. high and 30ft. in length, and, having had some little experience of the rapid growth of which this shrub was capable, decided to employ it. The three plants used were not large, each having some five or six growths a little under 18in. in length. A bit of special soil was used at planting, consisting of old melon soil and spent mushroom manure in the proportion of five to one. Very little of the trellis-work remains uncovered, and the plants are just now bristling with flower buds, which will presently give a delightful display. I can thoroughly recommend the plant to anyone requiring something for a similar purpose."



MAIDEN BRADLEY is a noble English home surrounded with gardens of exquisite charm and interest, and nestling in a park with wooded crests and spreading trees. The scenery is romantic and beautiful. It is a home in a rich and lovely framework, and surrounding it is a country of hills and vales, of chalky knolls, wild flowers, pleasant villages, and cottage gardens. Around this beautiful home of the Somersets is gathered an interesting history. Hard by is the church of All Saints, seen from many parts of garden and park, while a handsome monument perpetuates the memory of Sir Edmund Seymour, Bart., once Speaker of the House of Commons, and a figure of political importance in the reigns of Charles II.,

William and Mary, and Anne. But of still greater interest to the antiquarian is the old Priory Farm, about three-quarters of a mile distant, part of which forms the remains of what was at one time a hospital for leprosy women, founded by one Manasser Biset towards the end of Stephen's reign, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin and placed under the protection of a lay brotherhood, but eventually formed into an Augustine monastery, with prior and canons, by Herbert, Bishop of Sarum. Another interesting reminder of a distant past is an ancient house, formerly an inn—the Somerset Arms—where tradition records lived the Ludlow family. Loth as we are to leave the history of Maiden Bradley untold in its fulness, the gardens represent so much that is true and good in gardening of the present age, that we must confine ourselves more to these than to the mansion or ancient buildings forming part of the estate.

Many an historic mansion is placed in a framework so poor and unworthy that one sighs for the sweet disorder of Nature to blot out ugly beds and strange disturbances of meadow and woodland. We may see this for ourselves from the remarkable series of gardens described week by week—gardens of all kinds, some of the stately Italian school, others of no set style, and a few in which beautiful natural formations are emphasised and coloured with flowers appropriate to the picture.

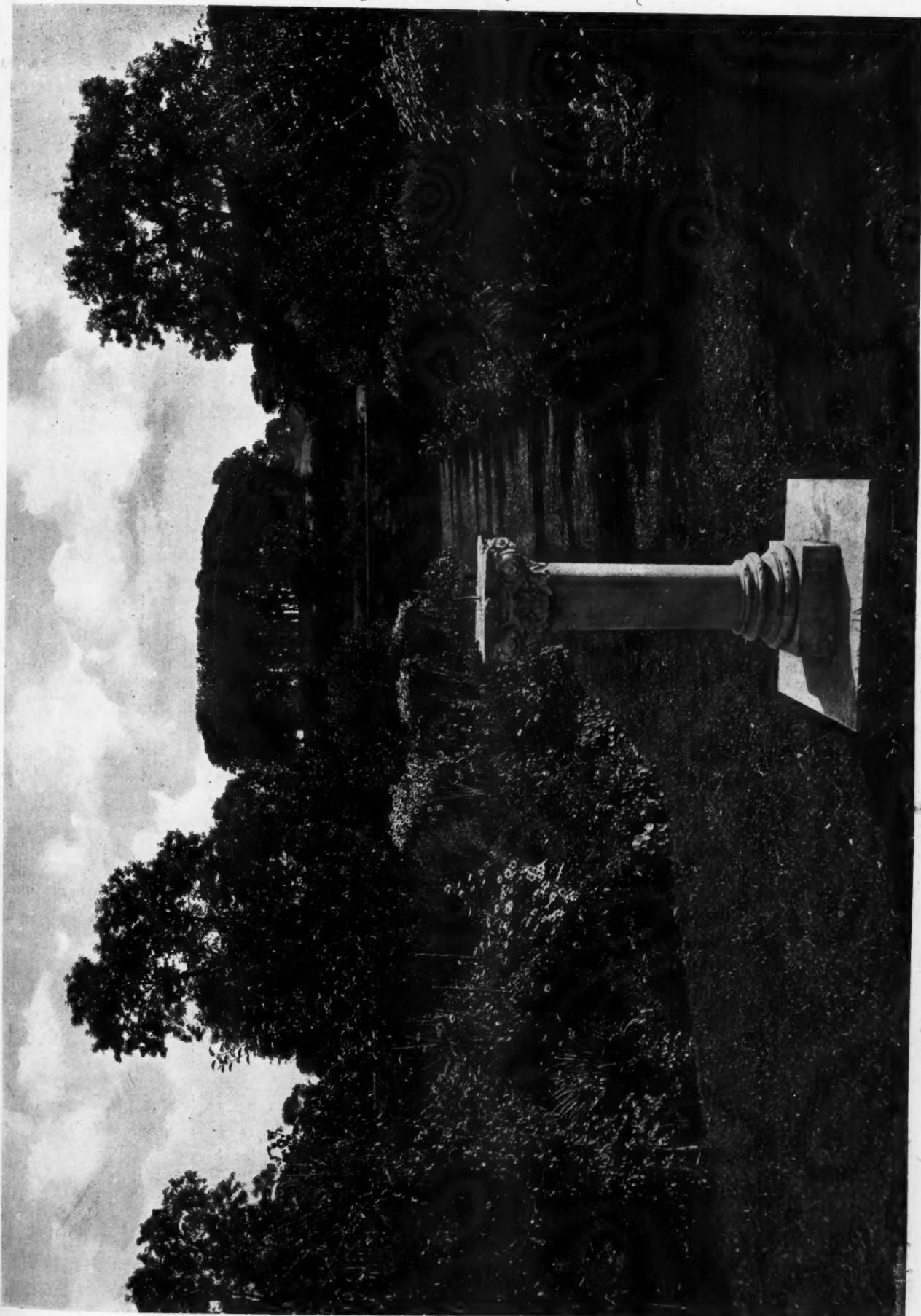
The severe outline of the house is softened by the caress of many beautiful climbers, and its boldness is agreeably pleasant through a proper regard for proportion. The garden and house fit happily in the picture. This is evident from the illustration representing the east façade, where climbers stain the lower half and no finicking shrubs and trees disturb the view. A stretch of velvety turf, relieved by a central vase and flowerbed, sets off the handsome proportions of the mansion, and presents no obstacle to a glorious view of park and meadow. This is a scene so thoroughly English and restful, that we would accept it as a way to associate park and garden, with neither discordant note nor sickly trees and shrubs to disturb the rich colouring of leaf and flower. Many an otherwise beautiful garden and woodland is spoilt through the unwholesome aspect of conifers and tender shrubs planted in a period when everything from Japan, China, or the warmer countries of the world were considered sufficiently vigorous and hardy



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THE GREEN WALK.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



GARDENS OLD AND NEW.—MAIDEN BRADLEY: THE OLD GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE PERGOLA.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

for this quixotic climate; but happily Maiden Bradley is free from excrescences. Its noble trees are of those kinds that give glory to the English park, and leafy woods cover many an acre of gently sloping ground. It is refreshing to sit in the shade of some fine tree and watch the fleecy clouds cast their shadows over the dense woods massed upon the hill, and to think how simple and dignified is this feature of Maiden Bradley, where English gardening in its most beautiful and truthful aspect is thoroughly understood and accomplished. Although, as the illustrations show, the simple form of gardening is appreciated for its own sake, the severer Dutch style is represented in the Dutch garden, where the sundial gives that centre-piece which seems necessary in a design so formal and quaint. This setting forth of more than one period is interesting and instructive, particularly at Maiden Bradley, where each phase is developed in its fulness,

inclining, however, to the freer and more natural gardening, in which the flowers are not subservient to a set design.

It is possible to wander for many hours in the gardens and discover fresh beauty at every turn, and the illustrations reveal how varied are the pictures unfolded as the year speeds on. When the eye tires of the brave colour masses in the Dutch garden, relief may be sought in the leafy groups of castor-oil plants or the grateful shade of the pergola. Grouping is a feature. We mean, massing certain things together to show their true value in the pleasure grounds. The castor-oil plant, or ricinus, is usually mixed up with other things as imposing in what is known as a sub-tropical garden, where its noble leaf is crushed against the spiny stems of the solanum or other plants used in the arrangement. Not so here, where by grouping the full effectiveness of the plant is obtained, and the whole scheme rendered more imposing and natural. The grouping of woodland on the hills, the trees in the park, and the flowers in the meadow, have been faithfully followed in the garden, and this is right, because it is an adaptation of the ways of Nature, who never dots tree or flower here and there without reason or meaning.

Hardy flowers and roses are largely planted, and the whole garden seems full of scents in summer and autumn, when the roses in the beds and scrambling over the pergola are in full bloom. Many forms of pergola have been shown in the illustrations of "Gardens Old and New" from time to time; the pergola here is of very simple design—plain uprights and cross rough stems, which provide supports for climbing roses or other creepers; and for this purpose alone it is worth making this feature. How rich a variety of climbing roses is possible in these days, when through the hybridists new kinds are added yearly to the long list. A simple pergola



Copyright

AN OLD VASE

"COUNTRY LIFE."

such as this gives an opportunity of creating a garden of climbing roses. Here the Crimson Rambler makes dashes of brilliant colouring, the Aimée Vibert is festooned with white perfumed clusters, and the apricot shades of W. A. Richardson are rich and lasting. And this gathering together of all that is most precious amongst climbing roses reminds one of the altered complexion of the English garden through the raising up of new races. Our forefathers knew little of the tea-scented rose, and nothing of the vigorous and fragrant-leaved Penzance briars and of the species introduced from other lands within recent years. Many old favourites still remain in favour, and long may they continue to do so; but with the great wealth of varieties available, varieties that flower from the first summer days until far into the autumn, it is not surprising that the rose enters the domain at one time sacred to the scarlet pelargonium and blue lobelia. We noticed that at Maiden Bradley summer bedders enter happily into the bedding, mingling with roses and other flowers, and this is a right use to make of tender exotics that give colour to the summer months.

Roses and flowers generally tell their story in the gardens here. Their colouring seems revealed with stronger force than usual, because there is no crowding up or attempts to obtain impossible effects. Everything is simple, and the surrounding scenery, the tree groups, and the climber-stained walls, help to intensify the rich massing in beds and borders.

We know not where to linger in our wanderings through Maiden Bradley and declare that spot to be the most beautiful; it is a garden of varying beauty. Sometimes a mass of sub-tropical foliage compels admiration, and then one may wander to the rose-covered pergola, or seek shelter from the hot sun in some



THE EAST FAÇADE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

grassy woodland path scored with shafts of light through the tree tops. Nor is it safe to declare any one season the most beautiful, for at all times flowers are scattered over bed and border; the daffodils of spring, the rose of summer, and the sumptuous colouring of autumn are each represented in their fullest beauty.

One feature will certainly appeal to the true gardener, and that is extending the principle of grouping until one has a garden of a single race of flowers. This is illustrated in the Sunflower Walk, a glorious picture of colouring, made by massing together all that is best in this family. It was a daring scheme, and successful because undisturbed by any foreign element. A mingling together of many other things would have ended in complete muddle—an unpleasant effect, wrong in colouring and in all ways.

As the illustration depicts, this is a veritable walk of sunflowers, annual and perennial, and gloriously rich on a



A WALK OF SUNFLOWERS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

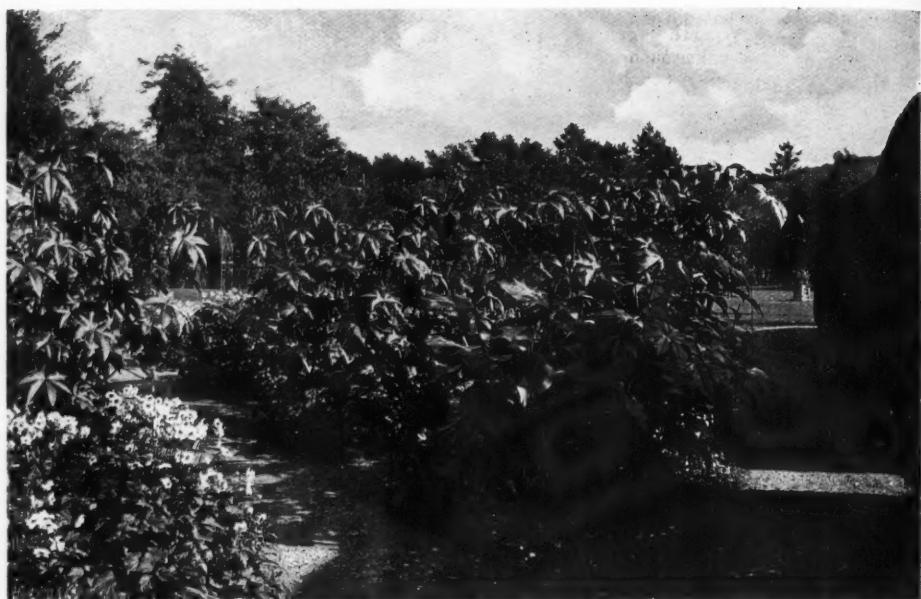
September day, before the tree foliage has changed to its autumn tints of crimson, gold, and brown. This massing together of one autumn flower seems the prelude to that still richer colouring of the woodland. The walk has a narrow path, broken by a creeper-covered arch, and it is interesting to note the great variety in growth and flower character shown by the various kinds. The perennial sunflowers are among the great autumn flowers, some as graceful as willows, with slender small-leaved flower-lined stems, others stiffer and bolder, and a few, like the variety *Miss Mellish* or the more recent *H. G. Moon*, tall and picturesque, sufficiently so to plant in groups on the lawn outskirts, as the custom is in the Royal Gardens at Kew.

We have seen nothing quite like this Sunflower Walk at Maiden Bradley, and a border of this kind provides flower pictures throughout the year when plants are so arranged as to follow each other in their appointed season. An illustration of this kind should help forward that beautiful phase of English gardening so rarely seen—the taking up of one family and using all its most charming members. It is a positive relief to find such a feature as this in a large domain, often given up to a stereotyped form of gardening that tires one from its constant repetition.

From the brave effect of sunflowers grouped boldly in two long borders it is pleasurable to wander to more restful spots, perhaps the Green Walk, where ferns and native shrubby things encroach upon a winding grassy path. We make special allusion to the features illustrated, as reference to them brings nearer home the lessons that one should learn from the gardens described week by week. This Green Walk is one of the most delightful and secluded spots in Maiden Bradley, and a cool retreat from the glare of a summer day. Another illustration is of the Old Garden, the garden of old-world

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GROUPS OF RICINUS, OR CASTOR-OIL PLANT. "COUNTRY LIFE"



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"COUNTRY LIFE."

SERPENTINE WALK.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

flowers, softly massed in the borders and thrown into relief by the tree group on the hill crest. One may linger here a while and see how restful is a garden where the flowers are arranged with simple taste and no harsh gravel paths deface the picture. The Old Garden is as simply planned as the lovely gathering of flowers in the cottage patch; the walk is of grass, flowers tumble over the margin, and trees marshalled in the background stand out clear and free against the sky. As one muses here, the sundial casting a sharp shade on the grass, Wordsworth's words occur to mind: "Laying out grounds, as it is called, may be considered as a liberal art, in some sort like poetry and painting,

and its object, like that of all the liberal arts, is, or ought to be, to move the affections under the control of good sense. If this

be so when we are merely putting together words or colours, how much more ought the feeling to prevail when we are in the midst of the realities of things; of the beauty and harmony, of the joy and happiness of living creatures; of men and children, of birds and beasts, of hills and streams, of trees and flowers, with the changes of night and day, evening and morning, summer and winter, and all their unwearyed actions and energies."

Maiden Bradley is a garden ever to remember, and only a pure love of flowers and a knowledge of their ways can produce the beautiful effects shown in the illustrations. It is an English garden in its best sense, and no department is wanting to make it interesting and complete.

LAZY NOON.

PAN was piping on the hills. Amaryllis lay in the shade of the trees. Her real name was a homelier one, but she liked to call herself that. She hung upon a bank among the wild thyme, and dabbled two brown feet in the waters of the



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THE DUTCH GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

purling stream. In the distance the hills were blue with heat, and below her cropped her herd of goats.

The sound of piping came faintly through the heat. Amaryllis raised her head and listened. "What if it were Pan," she said, "of whom I have heard the grey-haired man they call a poet speak, the great Pan who used to wander on our hills and bless the sheep and goats."

She scrambled upon a rock, and stood with lean swart hand shading her eyes, looking across the hills. "I would that I could see him."

The pipings seemed to come more distantly.

"I shall run," she said, "and look among the pines that grow yonder against the sky."

She sprang from the stone and began to run, her lean bare arms and legs glistening in the sun. Her feet scarcely touched the herb; she leapt the chattering streams, that strayed down the hillside, in gladsome bounds, her black curls rising and falling in one dark mass.

"Pan, Pan," she called out, with clear child voice. "Pan."

The piping came more clearly through the heat.

"I shall pray Pan," she thought, as she ran, "to bless our goats, that the he goats may get fat and the she goats give much milk, and that the flesh of the little kids be sweet, and my father will say to me, 'Well done, little Amaryllis; we could ill spare our shepherd maid who sought Pan upon the hills and prayed his blessing on our herds.' Aye, and I will tell the shepherds how I heard and saw the great god Pan piping on the hills."

And as these thoughts passed through her mind the slender maid flew onward more quickly over the green grass.

Still the faint sounds of Pan's pipings stole from the blue heat on the hills. Yet no form was to be seen of god or mortal treading the hot dry grass, not even of lonely shepherd shepherding his flocks.

But now the pipings ceased, and Amaryllis stayed her flight. She had come to a larger stream, and looked for the shallowest part to cross. She wandered down among the mossy stones. "Pan, Pan," she murmured.

Here the stream widened and sang more loudly its chattering song. Before crossing, Amaryllis raised her head and listened. The grasshopper chirped in the grass. The birds were silent in the noonday heat. Pan's pipings were silent too. Turning then her head, she saw lying upon a grassy knoll across the stream a goatherd with elbows on the grass, and reed within his lips. She stayed and waited still.

Softly came from the reeds the low sweet piping she had followed. The tears started to her eyes. Then it was not Pan, after all, and her goats would be straying the hills. But so sweet was the music it drew her feet over the warm pebbles and through the clear waters to the grassy knoll whereto the goatherd lay.

He ceased playing and raised his head.

"Why does the little maid weep?" he said.

"Alas!" she sighed, "I had thought it was Pan piping on the hills, and it is only you, a goatherd. And I had meant to plead with him for our goats. Now have I sought but to return and face the anger of my father, that I have left the goats upon the hills."

"They call me Pan," said the goatherd.

"But you are not really Pan," protested the little maid.

"Indeed I am," he answered. "Wouldn't you like me to bless your father's goats?"

"O Pan, Pan!" said the maid, "what shall I do for you if you do that?"

"Can you dance?" asked the goatherd.

"Yea; I often dance at sundown for the neatherds when they give me bowls of new milk."

"Come then and dance to my piping."

And there, upon the thymy bank, the goatherd lay and played upon the reeds in merry wise, and the little maid danced upon the green sward, lighter than the thistledown, quicker than gnats dancing in summer evenings. The brown feet twinkled merrily as she turned and twisted and lilted over the grass.

Then the goatherd rose and went piping down the hill, and Amaryllis followed after him, dancing. And when she came to where her goats were grazing on the hills she stopped, but Pan went on, piping up the hill. She saw his figure flitting in and out among the pine trees on the top, she saw him clear against the sky, and the piping died away as he disappeared from sight.

Then she called the goats together and drove them down the mountain slope, singing of Pan.

And from that day she was sure the goats waxed fatter upon the hills, and the young kids grew, and the milk of their mothers was sweeter.

"Ah!" said the shepherds, "it was but an old wife's tale of Pan. 'Twould be but Georgie, the master's son, who often goes about piping in the lazy noon, dressed up like a goatherd."

But to Amaryllis he was always Pan.

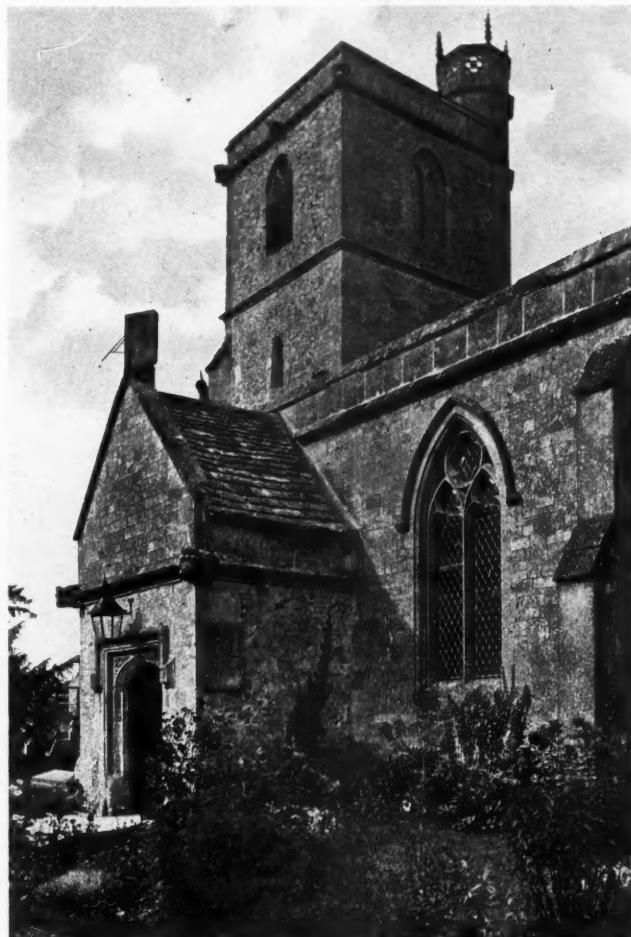
A. H. B.

"OLD BILL."

"I WORKS for the Squire, mum, and I takes no orders from anyone else; but if so be as he says I am to work three days for him and three days for you in the week, then I don't mind obliging you, mum." And so it was settled, and the "dear old man," as we soon got to call him, became our gardener. A lucky day it was for us when we engaged him, for although he was bent nearly double and was seventy-four, he was more active and did more work than any of the young men or boys in the place. He had a supreme contempt for my want of knowledge of gardening. "But what can you expect of them as has lived in London?" he would say, exclaiming. I need not explain that from the very first he considered the garden his; he allowed me to pick the flowers, but as to settling where the bulbs were to be put in, or the plants planted, or the seeds sown, that he claimed as his right and his alone. I never attempted to interfere with the kitchen garden, but I did sometimes wish to have a voice in the flower garden. "Well, of course I can put them tulips and hyacinths there, but they would look a deal better here," and "here" they were put. "I am going to help you with the weeding," I said encouragingly to him one day. "Well, I don't mind if you do, mum, so long as you don't pull up the flowers by mistake." I thought better of my weeding mania after this, and refrained from indulging in it. He had what he called "an eye for the looks of things," and was much pleased at my suggestion of a grass path up the middle of the kitchen garden; but "we must ask the Squire's leave," he said (the Squire was our landlord). "Yes, of course," said I; "but I know he will allow it; he likes grass paths." "Yes," Old Bill remarked, "he likes all things in keeping, does the Squire." I imagine the grass path was "in keeping" with the little garden, as the Squire duly gave his leave, and the old man spent many a happy day over the making of this path. He made the idea his own, and was much pleased with its effect from the little porch outside the drawing-room window. "I always said I should make a good landscape gardener," was his self-satisfied remark.

Old Bill never settled to do anything without prefacing it with "if so be as I'm spared." "If so be as I'm spared, I'll plant them seeds to-morrow"; or, "If so be as I'm spared, I'll give you a rare dish o' beans on Sunday." He was full of good thoughts in his odd way. One day I suggested he should give himself an hour or two off work and attend the Saint's day service at the village church. "No, thank you, mum; I gets plenty o' church and such-like in my own way; it's all here" (pointing to his heart), "and I talks to the Lord and He understands, and when I praises I says some of the hymns my daughter learnt at Sunday school; but I don't hold by no church much." I suppose I looked shocked, for he added quickly, "But I don't take no exception for it; there's some as it suits, but I feels happier in my thoughts when I am attending to His plants and things." Rain he called "the Almighty's watering-pot." "It is sure to come when it suits Him, and not when we think it suits us," he said to one of us who was complaining of the drought one day.

He was a very tender-hearted old man as regards animals; our pets soon got to be devoted to him. The collie dog would prance round him with delight, and our tiny kitten would execute its most coquettish side dance when Old Bill appeared in the morning. "My little mate" he called the kitten, and the name stuck to it when it grew into a large cat. We found a toad in our cellar one day, and took it out to the old man, who found a home for him under a stone in the rockery where he would be "snug and comfortable." He loved the birds, though they were "that cute and full of their mischief" that he spent hours in inventing means of "circumventing them." At the



MAIDEN BRADLEY: THE CHURCH AND SUNDIAL.

same time he took the greatest pains in keeping the little stone trough we had sunk in the lawn clean and filled with water in order that "they pretty little things may inj'y themselves in their bath."

Bill's worst enemies were the village boys, and the pains he took in "circumventing them" are not to be described. "The times they gets at the fruit is first thing in the morning, so I just comes over to have a look at the little garden the first thing in the morning, and I thinks they knows it now." "Potatoes and cabbages and onions is necessary, and must be growed, but it aint everyone as can grow the cowcumber, marrows, grass, and such-like, as we can grow here," he used to say. He left us no peace until we had "a bit o' glass," and never shall I forget the solemn procession of the frame being carried to its destined spot in the kitchen garden. Old Bill went first to show the way, then four big men with the frame on their shoulders, then the dogs and the "little mate," then the maids, and finally ourselves. It was grand to see the old man giving his directions. "Gently now; that's it—a bit more to the right; mind that there shrub; there—that'll settle down comfortable." For nearly two years the "bit o' glass" was a source of pride and delight to Old Bill, who was always giving us what he called "surprises" from it — early lettuces, radishes, mustard and cress. However, he grew in ambition, and we seldom had a talk with him without his hinting at the time when "that there necessary little greenhouse" would be put up. One day when I was particularly struck with the amount of work he had done, I said to him, "What should we do without you—the garden would never get on?" "No, mum, it wouldn't; there's no one nowadays as knows what work is, not as I understands it; you can't get a good day's work out of the young ones, not if you pay 'em double for it. Why, they rests and looks about them half their time."

"Why, that's never you, Bill. I thought you'd been dead years ago?" exclaimed an old acquaintance who spied him over the hedge at his work. "Oh, yes, it be I, sure



F. and R. Speaight.

THE MARQUESS OF BLANDFORD.

Copyright

E. J. P.

WATER

THE moral of this tale, if it have one, is that you should not take an Irishman up into the Highlands, for the two kinds of Celt do not seem to understand one another perfectly, nor to assimilate each other's whisky. I am not saying a word against the whisky, only that for the Irishman it is right to drink the Irish whisky and for the Scotsman the barley-bree—if that be the correct way of spelling it—of Scotland.

I had left Patrick Moriarty (that is the Irishman's name) on the hill with Roderick Macpherson, on the shores of Loch Broom. A fairer loch there is not on all the West Coast of Scotland, that has the fairest sea lochs you will see in all the

enough," said Old Bill; "I just dodders about and does my work."

Our maidens gave a little party at Christmas, and quite settled it could not be perfect without Old Bill, so he was sent an invitation, and duly appeared dressed in his best and determined to enjoy himself. The next day I went out to speak to him in the garden. "Well, Bill, I hope you enjoyed yourself last evening?" "Ay, mum, that I did; I have been to many and many a Christmas party where there was more people and more space and more noise, but I was never at a more perfect little party than yours last evening. Why there we was just as happy as doves in a cage. We ate our food and we drank our beer and we played our games, and then we sat round the fire and sang our songs, and there was no words—we was all as happy and comfortable together as could be." Then taking his red handkerchief out of his pocket and mopping his forehead, he paused a bit, and added, "and we were all ready for work to-day—not a headache amongst us." "Well, Bill, you must come next Christmas, and we will try to have just such another." "If so be as I'm spared, mum—if so be as I'm spared."

"Poor dear old man, he has not been spared. Some weeks ago, before I was up in the morning, I had this message, "Please, 'm, Old Bill's sister says will you come at once, as Old Bill was took bad last night and she can't make nothing of him." My heart sank; I knew the poor old fellow had been suffering pain in his ear, and one of my maids had told me that his "good night" to them the day before was a wish that none of them would ever have such a pain in their head as he had, and I feared he might be ill. I rushed down to the little cottage in the village where he lived with his sister. He was on his bed, thinking he was working in the garden, but he did not know me, and I saw at once that he would never work again. He lived for two days, always working in his imagination, never idle. He just knew his beloved Squire a few hours before he died, and passed away quietly at last. He had done his work.

world. Roderick Macpherson's chief business in life, besides the playing of the pipes and the drinking of whisky, was minding the cattle for the laird of—never mind the property. And it was light work, for the cattle could quite as well have minded themselves, and, besides, Roderick had his collie to help him. But they had to find a job of some sort for him, and he could neglect this one as well as any other. So all he had to do all the day was just to sit on the hillside and reel off his yarns by the yard or the fathom to Patrick Moriarty, who, having even less to do than Roderick, had leisure enough for listening to them.

Patrick Moriarty by profession was my soldier servant,

KELPIES.

enlisted in a regiment then quartered at Sligo, and now for the first time off his native isle. In the daytime I was away fishing and had no use for him. Hence his boundless leisure to listen to the boundless tales of Roderick.

For the first two days it would seem that, cattle herd though Roderick was to his trade, not a head of cattle did they see while sitting on the beautiful but damp heather, the one doing all the talking, the other all the listening. Patrick did his share of the talking when he came home to me.

"Och, sure, yer honour, it's a wonderful country entoile," and so forth, "wid its witches, fairies, ghosties, and a frightful craythur that they call the watter-kelpies. There's no the loike of them in ould Oireland at all at all."

On the third day, returning from fishing in a temper that was not of the sweetest, I called "Pat," and then "Patrick," and then "Patrick Moriarty," the three names denoting successive stages of wrath with the bearer. Yet still he did not answer, neither to these simply nor to the same with sundry epithets before them. So then the hue and cry was raised, but still there came no Patrick Moriarty. Now it was quite dark by this time, and the only man at all likely to answer for Patrick Moriarty was Roderick Macpherson, but he too was missing. So we went to dinner, and we finished dinner, and began to smoke. And then, at about the second pipe, there came a knock at the door, and a fearfully dishevelled, and withal terror-stricken, thing made its appearance. It was Patrick Moriarty—Patrick Moriarty thick of speech, unsteady of gait, with clothes dank with dew and ruddy with earth, and, by way of explanation of these strangenesses, as generous a reek of whisky about him as I have ever known emanate from any man, Scotch or Irish. It was so liberal that I could well conceive it possible for a man of delicate head to get passably drunk by merely being in company with him for a short while.

So this was the explanation sufficing for certain of the phenomena presented by him, but not for all, for besides the dishevelment there was the terror, which neither the whisky accounted for nor his fear of punishment, which was slight, nor the rebuke of his conscience, which was nil. So, to help him to



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

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WATER-KELPIES.

the explanation, I opened the conversation with the familiar "Well?" with an interrogative note.

Then he answered thickly, "Och, sure, and it's far enough from well it is, yer honour, and it's far enough from well yer honour would be if he'd seen the soights that Patrick Moriarty, as harmless a craythur as ever was born, has seen this noight."

"Well," I said again, "what sights were they, Pat?"

"Fwhat soights, does yer honour ask? Och, then it's meself will tell yer honour. Fwhen Roderick Macpherson left me on the heather with meself in a koind of plisant doze, I woke meself wid the fiery breath of the most frightful-loike craythurs on me countenance, and there, by the Holy Saints, was meself in a crowd of the watter-kelpies wid their horns loike a ship's masts, and the foire flashing from their eyes and the breath of them scalding hot, and the tails of them that had spokies to the end lashing on their soides that were rough loike a heather patch. And there was watter-kelpies of all sorts and conditions, scoores and scoores, may the Saints presarve us, and there was me, Patrick Moriarty, that could not get home to yer honour's dressing, for the watter-kelpies and the terror of it. It's a frightful country entoile this bonnie Scotland, as Roderick will be calling it. And it's meself will set the fut no more on the heather at all at all."

"If yourself would set the lips no more to the whisky bottle, it would be more to the purpose. Get out with you and clean yourself and sober yourself, and to-morrow we'll see what we shall do to you for appearing in this state."

That is the way in which we receive the revelations of seers. On the next day I preached at a sober and penitent Patrick Moriarty on the vice of drunkenness, and he received what I had to say with the pleasant grace of his nation; yet still, though he did not contest the charge of drunkenness, he stuck to his text of the "watter-kelpies." No arguments nor preachments could persuade him out of that. And that day, to keep him out of the way of harm and whisky and Roderick Macpherson, I took him with me to the fishing, a long trudge over the moor, during which he spoke never a word. But as we came down to the river and passed by the loch, out of which it runs for the special benefit of anglers and of sea trout, I felt a sudden grip of the arm, and, turning my head, saw that it was Patrick Moriarty with a face blanched with terror.



"STANDING AT EASE."

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C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

"The watter-kelpies!" he said hoarsely; "the watter-kelpies standing at ease!"

Then I looked whither he was looking, and saw what he saw—a herd of the Highland cattle knee-deep in placid enjoyment of the cool shallows of the loch, and then I knew. I knew what it was that Patrick Moriarty had seen the evening before through the tipsy mists of his eyes and brain—Highland cattle, sufficiently

alarming to one who knew only the cows of his native Sligo, Highland cattle not STANDING AT EASE, like these "watter-kelpies," but ramping and roaring round the unusual sight of a tipsy Irishman on the moor; and I understood once for all the recipe that has gone to the making of that weird invention, the water-kelpie—a Celtic imagination and a sufficient quantum of the barley-bree.

A THREEFOLD CORD.

"A THREEFOLD cord is not quickly broken." So I quoted in reference to the salmon gut which, to tell the truth, Simon Macdiarmid and I had found a little wanting. We had not, it is hardly necessary to say, used it threefold. What had happened was this. The day was bright and clear, the water was on the low side. I had fished all the morning and some of the afternoon without a touch, and, being badly depressed by the ill-success, for I knew we must have put the flies over many a fish, I suggested to Simon that we should try some finer gut. It was gut of the kind that a certain well-known and honest maker sells as "Samson Grilse Gut," a name that is supposed, and not without justice, to indicate its qualities. It was not meant for a heavy fish, but with care and with luck—the kind of luck that avoids any touch of the cast on a stone and any strain in strong water—a heavy fish might well be killed on it. We tried the cast, before putting it on, with a tug that was not quite of the Samson severity, but sufficient to prove the gut adequate to justify the second part of its name. There was no fear that it would fail to hold a good grilse, if he were discreetly handled; and one's own discretion one does not doubt.

There was a certain run on this river where the stream goes strongly, in rather a narrow channel between the main bank on the one side and an island in mid-river on the other. It is a favourite place for fish to lie, and to take, when the water is low. To this island we went in the boat. The first cast or two were without result, but the third had a result. A fish took the fly, with a rush in the strong water. Down stream he went for

royds, or so, then across the rough water with a run, the reel whirring out as he went, and on the far side of the strong water he jumped. Now that is not a fair trick for a fish to play. It was in vain to drop the point of the rod in the orthodox manner so soon as he came out of the water. The rod gave him no pull, no purchase to work on; but for purchase he had all the drag of the line in the heavy water. It was more than enough for his



CASTING FROM THE BANK.

purpose. It might have been enough even had my attachment to him consisted of nothing less strong than the stoutest and best single gut with which I had been fishing all the morning. As it was, with the Samson grilse gut, he made nothing of it. It was just as if he and I had no line of communication between us at all. I felt no tug, for my end of the line was slack enough from the rod point to the water, but when I raised the point of the rod again, in the anxious hope of still feeling the weight of the fish at the end, there was nothing there. The line came back to me without resistance, and I was the poorer, not only by the fish, which for a moment I had counted as mine—and he was a big one and worth the counting—but also by a foot or two of the best Samson grilse gut. Then it was that I lapsed into the eloquent language of Ecclesiastes and ejaculated sadly to Macdiarmid, "A threefold cord is not quickly broken." I could not say the same for the Samson grilse gut, although in this instance the gut was not to blame. It could not in reason be expected to bear the weight of a heavy fish thus jumping when some royd, or more of the line were held by the strongest stream. It was a disaster reflecting no discredit on the angler or his tackle, which is a great deal more



"GIVE HIM THE BUTT."

than you can say of very many of the calamities that beset the contemplative man in the pursuit of his recreation.

What Macdiarmid said about the fish getting 'off' was: "Eh, it's a great pett," with several other remarks in English and Gaelic that do not look pretty in print, although much to the point and voicing my own feelings very accurately. And then he said, in answer to my sententious observation about the three-fold cord—a quotation well known to him, for he was a faithful student of his English Bible—"Eh, and we'll just try the threefold cord."

I had to expostulate with him a little, although expostulation with Macdiarmid on a question about salmon fishing was a presumption on which I seldom ventured. But the idea of using triple gut, which was what he meant by the threefold cord that we were to try, was so very strange, considering the clearness of the sky and the water, that I could not assent without a little demur.

"Why," I said, "we tried that thick single gut all the morning, and you see we never got a touch, and directly we put on the finer we had him."

"Aye, we had him, but we didn't keep him," said he, with fine humour. "The trouble is to have him and to keep him too."

I admitted that that was the trouble, but how was it to be met by so strange an expedient as using triple gut? When single gut had failed, as I was disposed to think, because of its being too obvious to the fish in the bright light and the clear water, surely there was far less chance of success with treble gut. It was thus that I put the case to Macdiarmid, and for answer he said, in a way that was exceedingly characteristic of him:

"I'm no verra sure."

Macdiarmid almost always was, or said he was, "No verra sure." But, for all this charming humility in his expressions, I never knew a man who was more wedded, in practice, to his own opinions. His uncertainty was purely theoretical. His practical confidence was very fully justified, for if any man knew more of salmon and their ways, that man has not yet come within my ken. To do him further justice, Macdiarmid nearly always had reasons for the faith that was in him, and could justify his conclusions by argument.

"Ye see," he said, "it's like this. It's no the thickness, I'm thinking, of the gut that fleytes" (frightens) "the fush; it's just the shining and the glitter of the gut in the sunshine. Aweel, if that's so, it's maist likely, to my thinking, that the thick single gut'll fleyte them mair than the treble gut. Ef ye'll please to look at it on the watter yersel', ye'll see what I mean—that the three-ply does'na shine by half so bright as the single gut." It really was so, even as he told me, and I saw the difference at once as he laid the two beside each other on the silver stream. The three-ply had varieties of light and shade in it, each strand as it came over another made a corner in which a tiny shadow lurked, and the whole thing was not nearly so glaring and noticeable as the straight unbroken line of silver made by the single gut.

"Very well, Macdiarmid," I said, "I am quite of your opinion so far. Now then to see what the salmon think of it."

The rest of the story does not take long to tell, so quickly did the salmon show us what they were pleased to think of it. The days in the autumn salmon-fishing season soon grow short, but before the sun was so far fallen that photography became an impossibility we had given the opportunity for the taking of these three pictures, which show fairly enough the truth of the saying that the threefold cord is not quickly broken. The first cast we came to was one that I could manage easily from the bank. It is the most pleasant of all salmon-fishing, this CASTING FROM THE BANK. And with the third throw that I made a fish was obliging enough to prove that Macdiarmid had right in his contention. The third throw hooked him. Then it was pleasant indeed to feel that I could play him with confidence, that I could put pressure on him, need not treat him as if he were on fine-drawn trout tackle. It is all very well for people to talk (I talk myself) about the delight of playing a fish on delicate tackle. It has its delight. What form of fishing has not? But the moment after one has just lost a big fish, through no fault of one's own, from having him on too delicate tackle,



WATCHING WITH THE GAFF.

this is not the moment when a man will get much satisfaction from playing a fish on fine gut. It is at such a moment that he will feel the greater pleasure in the confidence that all is right, that risks are minimised, and that unless the unexpected happens the fish will be brought to the gaff. And in this instance the unexpected did happen.

You may see in the second picture the uprising boughs of a tree branch stuck in the bottom of the river. Carelessly I had taken no notice of it till the fish, making a short quick rush up stream, was close upon it. "GIVE HIM THE BUTT," cried Macdiarmid fearfully, "or he'll be in yon branch." But it was too late, and in "yon branch" he was before my giving him the butt had the power to check him. The line, the cast, or something, was round "yon branch," and then I had special occasion to bless that threefold cord that is not quickly broken. With my single gut, even of the stoutest, I doubt whether I should have had a chance of the fish, but with the Samson grilse gut I should surely have been broken. As it was, however, with the stout three-ply, I had every hope, and in another moment my hope was proved good, the branch swayed in the stream, a portion broke away and sailed for a few moments after the salmon, then shook itself free of the line and floated harmlessly down the stream. The crisis was over, the three-ply had held good. I realised that the fish was no very big one, that with the stout tackle I was his master, and in a few minutes more I had brought him in to Macdiarmid, WATCHING WITH THE GAFF. In the course of the afternoon, catching two more, and heavier, fish, I proved yet again Macdiarmid's contention that the treble gut does not greatly "fleyte" the fish. I do not hold these cases, however, as furnishing proof as clear of the value of the treble gut on a bright day, for, of course, as the sun went lower the glitter must have been less. But that first fish, caught in the bright sunlight, with gut coarse in comparison with some that I had been using without success, seemed an argument very hard to upset. Moreover, there was reason in it, as Macdiarmid said, reason consisting in the shadows thrown by one strand passing over another. The single gut has none of these shadows. Unfortunately this was the last really bright day on which I was fishing, this on which Macdiarmid gave me the advice which I followed with results so good. But I mean to give the thing another trial on the first opportunity, and the more so because the threefold cord, in the case of fishing gut, is a vast deal cheaper than the best single. It is perhaps for that reason that so many despise it.

THE PAST . . . SHOOTING SEASON.—II.

THE principal difference in the Scotch shooting season of to-day and thirty years ago is that it is now a two months' holiday instead of one as formerly. Of course there always were sportsmen who stopped North until the staking season closed, but at that time they were very few indeed, and it might then have been fairly said that 200 rifles did the majority of the deer-stalking. After the first week in September you might travel about the Highland railways a good deal and see no shooters on the move, whereas any time in August, and particularly

from the 8th to the 12th, it was impossible to get about at some of the principal stations without treading on dogs' toes or on ladies' dresses. The breakfast at Perth Station which awaited the Highland night mail train from Euston, and arrived about nine o'clock in the morning, was most enjoyable. There one heard and ate as much as was ever crowded into a short half-hour—that is, if one was lucky enough to get a seat. In those days Highland game consisted of deer for the few and grouse for the many; now there is no South Country game that has not been pressed into the Highlander's service, to swell grand totals for tenants' game bags and bank balances for Highland lairds. That is the reason why the majority stop up the second month, for besides the large increase of deer ground, the Highlanders are beginning to find out that they possess coverts and lakes. The latter were devoted to trout alone, and now it is discovered that good trout lakes, or ponds for that matter, which will carry duck are as good to any game estate as an equal extent of covert. The latter used to be of very little use indeed; a few roe-deer which could be shot when the moor wanted a day's rest, and when the cook required a change of soup stock, was all the use the majority of them were put to. Black game were not in the woods by the end of August, and sportsmen used to shoot them over the dogs on the open moors after August 20th, more in sorrow than in anger, and no doubt regretting all the time what easy shots they offered. I have made one of four guns who on a twentieth day of August, up by St. Mary's Loch, have killed forty brace of black game, besides grouse; a possible excuse for such butchery was that it would never do to befool young dogs after they have found so well, and roded up to their game as only black game can teach them how. Besides this excuse there was the other one, that the moor did not contain a foot of covert, so that as soon as the time arrived for the black game to desert the open ground they would say good-bye, for that year at least, to the tenants of the moors. Perhaps also those who had woods of larch and fir to attract the black game shot them, nevertheless, in the open, because their shooting season did not extend beyond the time for the forked tails of the cocks to become mature, and the birds to return to their woodlands. In that respect it is a very good thing that the Scotch season is now a double one, and that many shooters like to see black game and capercailzie in the bag along with the pheasants. The black cock is really a magnificent bird to look at and to shoot, but in August even the cunning old cocks, then only half-fledged, seem to be ashamed of themselves, and lie in the heather almost as closely as their half-grown offspring, which they have never known or cared for.

Of course it is the driving of grouse that has really rendered this second half of the season necessary in Scotland, for Scotch game will not generally drive to advantage until towards the middle of September. That is why other game, such as pheasants and wild duck, has been fostered. In the past season it is said that the Mackintosh and his friends at Moy, near Inverness, accounted for 500 wild duck in the day. Of course, this means tame-bred ones, or at least ducks bred by those well-fed birds that never need to go down to the sea or the marshes in search of safety and food. On the same estate, too, at Dunachton, shot this year by Mr. Clarence Mackay, Sir John Austin imported pheasants' eggs about twenty years ago, and since then the birds have spread, and other shooters have seen the advantage of breeding them, as he did, by hand, so that covert shooting—once neglected in the bargain for a moor—is now recognised as part of the annual proceedings throughout the Highland straths. I say straths, because pheasants love low ground, and as long as they can reach it will leave the hills for the lower coverts. One thing I do not think the lairds have succeeded in doing—they have not made pheasant killed in Scotland worth more than one killed in England. Nature or fashion did that for their red grouse, for a brace of them still cost the shooter one pound in Scotland, whereas he can have two brace at the figure in England, where, nevertheless, grouse driving, which some people contend is the "only sport" with the birds, is far better than in the North. Sir Edward Green's party in the North Fiding, which included the York and Ainsty M.F.H., accounted for 960 brace in three days in this somewhat poor season for Yorkshire. The Duke of Devonshire got 3,000 brace in seventeen days. At Wemmergill (where the late Sir F. Milbank made his great season's bag of over 17,000 grouse in 1872, and his great personal bag of over 700 grouse in the day), five days' shooting this year resulted in 2,060 brace; then came another five days of about 1,500 brace, as a set-off to the Moy Hall 1,670 brace in four days.

Another good driving bag made close to Moy Hall, namely, at Farr, was 770 brace by Mr. Mackenzie's party in three days. At Lochindorb, in Morayshire, four days' driving resulted in 848 brace, and 1,161 brace in six days. None of these figures begin to compare with the English grand totals of 1872, nor for the day with the 1893 record at Broomhead of 1,324 brace made by Mr. Rimington Wilson's party. This sportsman had less chance for his Boss single triggers this year. This was followed by 801 brace, or 2,125 brace in two days. Nothing at all like it was possible in England this year, and never has been at any time in Scotland. Quite a remarkable bag for Wales was that made by Mr. Wynne Corrie on Lady Williams-Wynn's moors, the best day being 462 brace.

Partridge shooting in the past season followed on two bad years, and yet so partial is our English climate that, even in those two years, some extraordinary bags were made, and in one of them the birds in some parts of Aberdeenshire were more plentiful than ever known before. The hatch last spring was said to be good everywhere, but after two bad seasons obviously there was a short supply of breeding birds, and consequently, where the thunder-showers did not do as much damage as in most places, the young stock was not up to some former years in numbers. The first big day's bag was at Hockwell Hall, where Prince Victor Dhuleep Singh, following in the footsteps of his father, accounted for 360 brace in one day, and this was followed by Lord Carnarvon at Highclere with a bag of 170 brace. Yorkshire made a bold bid to equal the Eastern Counties when Mr. John Menzies with five guns accounted for 354 brace in four days. In Hampshire, on Lord Northbrook's Stratton estate, seven guns bagged 600 brace in three days, 320 brace being picked up on the best of them. Mr. Arthur Blyth killed 930 brace in a similar period, on the ground where he obtained the records for the two seasons previous. Lord Ashburton followed with a 1,000 brace bag of partridges in four days on The Grange in Hampshire, which, although beaten as a partridge preserve for the past three years, still holds the record for a day (1,461 partridges), as it does also for three consecutive days (3,526 partridges). But Holkham had until 1887 held the record for partridges with a bag of 3,392 birds in 1885. This, in the former year, was beaten at The Grange, also in four days, by a bag of 4,109 partridges; and this season again, Lord Leicester's estate stands first with a four days' bag of 2,400 partridges. The best four days that ever has been accomplished in England, was 4,316 partridges at Houghton in Norfolk in 1897; since which date we have not had a real good partridge season. It will be seen that the Holkham bag for this year barely exceeds half the record.

Covert shooting ended very badly in consequence of the illness and death of Queen Victoria, and some of the shooting which ought as a rule to take place in January was put off till February. This was the case at Lord Ardilaun's Ashford estate in Ireland, where the record bag of woodcock is generally obtained in January, but this year was a February event. The bag was 117 birds for the best day; 254 woodcock for four days. Lord Ardilaun has killed as many as 205 woodcock in the day there, but this has often been referred to as "254 couple," which is wrong. No such bag was ever made there or elsewhere in Ireland in a day, as far as is known to the "oldest inhabitant."

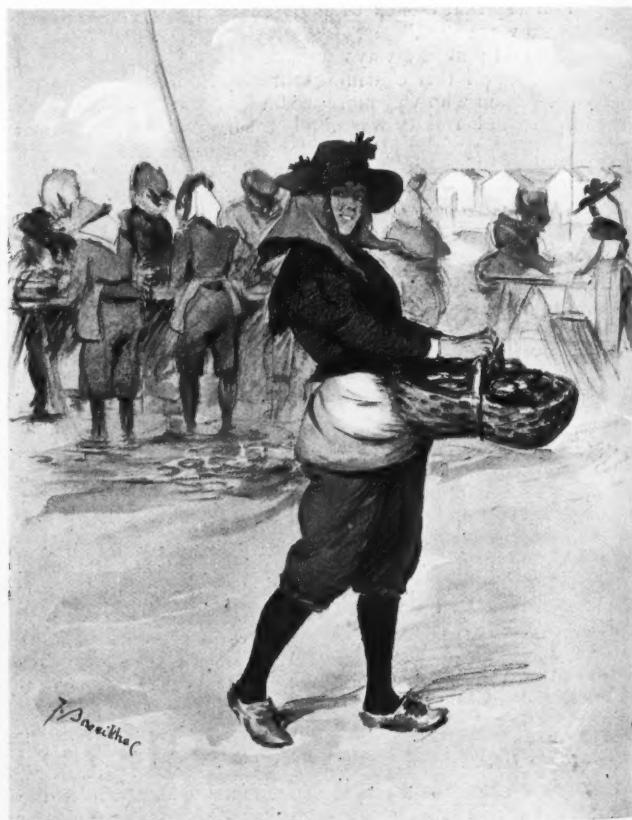
There are now a great number of places where they kill 1,000 pheasants, and often this is repeated on the same estate on several consecutive days. The places where they do this or something near to it, or exceed 1,000 head per day, counting other game, are far too numerous to give in an article, even if the writer knew them all. I am not certain that the most advanced game preservers do not now look with more favour on wild ducks than on pheasants, and the sale of pheasants' eggs for rearing under hens is as much a recognised business as the sale of pheasants' eggs. These I see one gentleman is now advertising for sale as coming from Hungary. It is a long journey for eggs to make without being damaged by the shaking. It has been stated that Hungarian partridge eggs are offered in this country, but I never heard of any such thing being done, and I think any caution against buying that which is never offered for sale is unnecessary. It is strange, if pheasants' eggs can be brought from Hungary in good condition for incubation, that everybody who wants to import new species imports the birds themselves, and not their eggs. This was so with the capercailzie, and is so with the great bustard.

The quantity of pheasants bagged in a day no longer counts for very much, unless, in speaking of the bags made, the guns unite to give the higher praise to the beating and the sportsmanship of their host by adding, "all high birds." That is what the guns like to be able to say, for reasons other than those of politeness, and what a host best likes to hear from appreciative guests. I have heard of at least one place where they kill 1,000 wild duck in the day, and soon no low-ground shooting will be considered first-rate unless it has its line of ponds capable of furnishing several thousand ducks, which are certainly better shooting than pheasants when they are both equally well driven. One great advantage of the wild duck is that he interferes with no other game, not even with the trout.

ARGUS OLIVE.

THE OYSTER AT HOME.

THE oyster is at home with us, in our native Whitstable, also in Wales, and, in less considerable quantity and quality, elsewhere in, or off, our islands. Renowned Rutupiæ, place famous on the menus of the ancient Romans, those excellent and imperial gourmets, as the site of the oyster-beds, *par excellence*, of the *orbis veteribus notus*, is done other than our Richborough, in Kent, no longer an oyster



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AN OYSTER GIRL.

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or other fish producing township. Nevertheless the oyster, and even the oyster of the finest qualities and perfection, is indigenous enough. We may take that credit to ourselves. But nowhere in our islands is he so much in evidence, so obviously at home, as in one of the French centres of his cultivation, that is to say, at Arcachon, in the South of France, in the department of the Gironde. There are other centres, such as Cancale in the North, and Marennes, where many go from Arcachon as to a fattening



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BOATS GOING TO THE OYSTER-BEDS.

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coop, but at none of them is the oyster and his life business so big a business and so picturesque a business as at this combination of original fishing village, later and smarter houses with apartments to let furnished, their satellite streets of shops, and villas set back on the higher ground among the fir trees, all of which is now comprised in the name of Arcachon. Arcachon, being only a score or two of miles south of Bordeaux, is a favourite watering-place for the people of that claret-producing town. They flock there in the summer-time, and, living for the most part in the little houses that look out on the sands and waters of the great tidal "bassin," spend most of the sunny days on the sands, in tents, clad in bathing costumes of the most fanciful design—a bright scene, quite un-English. Inland of Arcachon, in the Hinterland, is all that queer country of Les Llandes, where the shepherds go about on their long stilts, clad in the woolen skins of their sheep. It is all flat, brushwood covered. But between this flat land and the sea, for hundreds of miles, runs the great barrier reef of the sand-dunes, clothed with the maritime pine, making a great sombre forest of perpetual silence, save when the winds from the Atlantic stir it, the foot falling noiselessly on the soft yielding sand that is so wearisome to walk in. Here and there the sand-hills rise to a great height. You will meet few folk except in the season for collecting the turpentine from the pine trees, but will see abundant evidence of their existence in the form of little tin pots set below gashes in the tree trunks made to allow the valuable gum to bleed forth—all being done under the strict sanction of a Republican Government, more paternal than an Englishman would endure under his Monarchy. It is among this forest and these sand-dunes, that begin immediately behind the lower-lying fishing village and semi-fashionable watering-place of Arcachon, that the villas are planted in their gardens, with an hotel or two that are far more affected by the British visitor than any of the apartments on the low level of the bassin. The British season, if it may be called so, for in good truth but few Britons congregate there, is the winter. The climate is mild and equable, the pine trees give a shelter from cold winds, the sandy soil is exceptionally dry, and the aromatic dust from the pines acts like balm on diseased lungs. There is a little golf, a little lawn tennis; there is a casino, but it is shut in winter; even all the blessed optimism that goes by way of compensation with consumptive illness cannot justify

the cheeriest of invalids in calling the place gay; but there is always a picturesque element to be found by anyone who will be at the slight pains of descending from the upper town among the pines to the level of the bassin in order to watch the coming and the going in their boats of the numerous population that occupies itself with the oyster culture. It is true that the pains of the ascent to the upper town again are by no means so slight; but it is possible to hire a donkey.

A deal of this business of the oyster culture is done by the fisher ladies, and a prime factor in the picturesqueness of the scene is the gayness of their attire. The oysters live on the mud-flats at the farther side of the bassin from the town. Mud-flats are muddy. It is, therefore, no mere theoretical penchant for the rational costume that makes these good ladies don what is euphoniously called the divided skirt, but may be styled, more expressively,

knickerbockers. And whether it be the natural taste of the French, or some mysterious liking for gay colour on the oyster's part, it would seem that the colour *de rigueur* for these divided skirts is a most brilliant scarlet, inclining to crimson. They are voluminously large, and the effect, as boat after boat goes by bearing these gaily-clad ladies, is picturesque in the extreme. To reach the oyster-beds the boats coming from the fishing quarter have, of necessity, to pass the watering-place at less or greater distance, according to the quarter whence the wind blows. The men for the most part wear ordinary fishers' jerseys, with long sea boots, and many of them too have the gay scarlet knickered.

The number of the oyster parks or enclosures was reckoned some years ago by hundreds, carrying 6,000 or so tiles for the collection of the spat when it begins to settle; whence are produced some two hundred million of young oysters every season. These are big figures, and probably they would be bigger if they were corrected up to date. But such as they are, they are sufficient to show that the oyster culture industry is a large affair, finding occupation for a large number of the scarlet-knickered ladies and high-booted gentry.

The rate of mortality, however, would seem to be appallingly large in the oyster population, seeing that only one in a million or so, on the best computation, comes to maturity. But this is of the less consequence because of the amazing size of the family, one parent being responsible (again according to the computations of science) for anything from 300,000 eggs to 800,000 eggs. Perhaps it may be a surprise to folk who know the oyster only in



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AT WORK ON THE OYSTER-BEDS.

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his native form of "succulent bivalve" to learn that he has a roving period of life when he does not adhere to his native rock—generally composed of countless shells of predeceased members of his own kind—but goes hither and thither at the mercy of the waves and wind, with a very little freedom of motion on his own account gained by opening and shutting certain thin cilia or tentacles. It is in this condition, which is the first phase after the egg stage, that most of the big death rate is incurred. Obviously, he floats to be eaten by anything that swims in the sea. Moreover, when he passes this stage—that is to say, when he closes his cilia for the last time, and sinks to the bottom to assume the steady mode of life of the oyster proper—then the chances in his favour are not very heavy, for if the winds and waves have wafted him beyond the confines of the oyster-bed, and he sinks down on a floor that does not supply him nicely with lime to make his shell from, then he is bound to perish without a roof over his head. But granted all goes well, and he sinks either on an old oyster shell or on tiles specially prepared to give him the necessary lime, as may probably happen to him at Arcachon, then he may begin his work of shell-building, and have a reasonable chance of growing up into a respectable member of oyster society. But still he has numberless enemies, of which the chief seem to be the starfish and the small crabs. It is in order to protect him from these, and for ease of removing him to secure places, that the tiles are given him to attach himself withal. The oyster-bed in its natural condition is at the depth of anything from three to twenty fathoms or more, so that the process of dredging or raking up the oyster from such a depth is attended with much destruction of the brood of all ages. But to pursue, after the manner of the melancholy Jaques, the seven or more stages of the oyster, he will have grown to the age of six or eight months on his tile before he acquires the size of a threepenny bit or thereabout. He will be placed under the care

when the tide recedes from him, and to open it again only when the tide returns. But by gradually accustoming him to have but a small share of the sea-water daily, and then shifting his cage so that he is reached by only the height of the flood tide on each alternate flow, he learns to keep his shell closed longer—to go over a tide, so to say, with his shell closed. To open the shell, when there is no chance of water, means speedy death



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BRINGING THE OYSTERS ASHORE.

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LOADED ON BARROWS.

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of the lady in the scarlet knickerbockers, within the shelter of a cage of such small mesh that the starfish and the crab cannot get at him, and at a certain stage of his growth he will be dissevered from the tile and set with others of his age and standing to grow to maturity. It may be that at this period of life he will be set to a course of hard training—training, that is to say, to go a journey. The oyster learns to shut his shell

to him, and the object of teaching him this hard lesson is to enable him to go on journeys in course of which fresh sea-water is not obtainable. From Arcachon many youthful oysters go out to people the beds of Marennes, where they partake of the algae that give them the green tinge so prized by epicures, or even to our own beds at Whitstable, whence it will appear that all "natives" are not aborigines.

The artificial culture and fattening of oysters seems to be a practice as old as the scientific appreciation of good things to eat, and was first followed, according to Pliny, at Baiae in the time of Augustus, and later at Lake Fusaro and many other places.

Singularly enough the oyster seems very susceptible to frost, and the severe winter of 1890-91 entailed a loss estimated at many thousand pounds to our native beds at Whitstable.

It is the one prospective drawback to the flats in the neighbourhood of King's Lynn, where they are establishing extensive new oyster-beds, that they lie in a cold corner of our island.

BOOKS OF THE DAY.

WE have grown accustomed to getting some very pleasant series of children from Mrs. L. T. Meade's pen, but her latest book, "The Secret of the Dead" (White), is of a slightly different character from her earlier works, and might be described as a sensational novel with a child in it. Hughey, whom we, at first, conceive as a startlingly unpleasant and precocious child, is developed into a little hero as the tale is unfolded, but even to the end his preternatural shrewdness and never-failing presence of mind are painful to contemplate. Lucy Merriman, the heroine, came to London to stay with her aunt, Mrs. Morris, and to help her with her lodgers. She was allowed to find her way alone to her destination, which she found to be a narrow, dirty-looking house, in a quiet street, and there she was received in the hall by a "small boy of six or seven years of age," who declined to go to bed, and handed her a letter with the remark: "You read your letter, and while you're a-reading of it I'll be reading of you." His mother was from home on some mysterious business, and Hughey felt himself every inch her representative and more. "You'd best know at once that I am the real master of this 'ere 'ouse; you'd

better know at once that you must be sweet to me and make much of me, or it will be worse for yourself," was his rather truculent welcome of his cousin a few minutes later. He ordered tea for her promptly and thoughtfully, and with his baby brother's help made the meal disappear with equal celerity.

"Aint you hungry, Cousin Lucy?"

"Very," answered Lucy Merriman, looking sadly at the meal which Hughey was rapidly disposing of.

"I declare," he said, after he had finished three pieces of toast, and scraped his egg-shell out very clean, "it seems a sad pity Hannah don't know how much ladies want who have had a long journey. Why, you've heat up every scrap of the meal, and she'll say *you* are greedy!" It does not sound nice, but the child was an abnormal one in many respects, and one would be glad to think that such a child never really existed. A wicked father and an invertebrate mother, with the shifts of poverty and much loneliness, had so incredibly sharpened his naturally acute wits, that we feel chilled as at a monstrosity, but his wonderful protecting loyalty to his mother and "the dead 'un" compels our admiration long before the end. An aged lodger died in the house during Mrs. Morris's absence, and confided a valuable family secret to Lucy before his death—this is the "secret of the dead." Various people, all more or less objectionable, scheme and plot in many vain endeavours to wrest the secret from Lucy's keeping, but find her wary and incorruptibly faithful to her trust. The story, though in some parts morbid, is well written, and its characters are skilfully delineated with the geniality which latent humour gives.

In a very modest and unaffected preface to "The Relief of Kumasi" (Methuen and Co.), Captain Harold C. J. Bliss tells us this is his first attempt at book-making, and hopes it will serve the turn till "a standard history of this war be written by some more competent hand." But he has written a clear account of an interesting campaign, which loses nothing from his having been obliged to stick to his personal experience and relate only what occurred under his own eye. Unlike many older historians, he takes little for granted on the reader's part, and prefixes his account with a lucid and intelligible sketch of the little-known geography and history of the scene of operations. Of the men of the West African Regiment, he says: "There is the proportion usual in African regiments of British officers and non-commissioned officers, but its soldiers are recruited in the colony, and are chiefly Mendis and Temanis. They are little, agile men, and, being natives of the forest, are of the greatest use in such country." During the campaign they acted as scouts. They, and all the other West African troops, are armed with the .303 Martini-Enfield carbine, which Captain Bliss says "is a most excellent little weapon for them." The other troops were largely composed of Yorubas and Hausas, though the Nupés recently raised as an experiment did good work in the war. The actual relief of Kumasi must be taken as the central point in the campaign, and we cannot better illustrate the vigour and vividness of the author's

style than by quoting his description of the final assault: "Lieutenant-Colonel Wilkinson, commanding the advance guard, then ordered up the guns, which were massed in a semi-circle a short distance in rear of the fallen tree, whence they began to belch forth destruction at the unseen foe, whilst the murderous Maxims poured belt after belt of hand lead into the adjacent bush. The scream of the shells, the sharp tapping whi-r-r of the machine-guns, and the dull crash of the infantry volleys at intervals, created a perfect pandemonium, while the ceaseless war of Dame guns continued with unabated fury on our front and flanks. It was enough to strike terror into most savages, this duel at two-score yards, but neither side wavered for an instant, and so the battle went on until night began to lower the curtain of darkness upon this closing scene of the drama. None of these facts, however, escaped the watchful eye of the commandant, who at the moment advanced and took up his position by the guns, from whence to direct the progress of the fight. As apparently no impression had been produced upon the enemy by this hour-and-a-half's rain of shells and bullets, and ammunition had to be economised as much as possible, the expected order to charge soon came. Then was heard the shrill blast from massed buglers 'Cease fire,' and, to quote from despatches, 'it was obeyed as if on a field-day.' The colonel was changing his tactics. An unearthly silence intervened for a few seconds. The enemy, wonderstruck, almost instinctively followed the same course, but only to redouble their fusillade after a few moments. The leading companies then formed into line to the front and left flank, whilst three more took up a position almost at right angles to them. Then came the inspiring notes of the 'Charge.' The men were already chafing like restless war-horses for the shout that was to lead them on. Some had fallen, and casualties were coming fast now, though hitherto the very fact of our propinquity to the enemy had kept down our losses considerably. Then with a cheer the whole of the advance guard, the commandant's own escort joining in, sprang into the bush, while an answering shout of savage rage peeled back from the stockades. Unfortunately the dense growth checked the impetus, so the soldiers had to cut their way with machetes, chanting the while their deep-toned war-song, and ever drawing nearer to their prey. It was not until our men rushed round and clambered over the stockades that the enemy finally quitted them, leaving in their haste many of the dead and wounded, which unmistakably showed the panic in which they fled. The troops behaved magnificently, and in making this statement it must be borne in mind that they were terribly outnumbered by the dreaded Ashant's, that they had hitherto had no big success, but had suffered an almost unbroken series of reverses, and that they were all young soldiers." This dramatic passage may serve to whet the reader's appetite, but necessarily it gives no hint of the terrible sufferings of the brave and gallant garrison who waited so loyally and gallantly, or of the no less terrible marches of the relieving force. In reading of the exciting end, we are often apt to forget the long and arduous preparation for it.



AT THE THEATRE

An interesting experiment was made by Miss Rosina Filippi—a clever actress of whom we see too little nowadays—who recently dramatised a novel of Jane Austen's, and presented it at a matinée at the Court Theatre. Miss Filippi, wise in her generation,

saw that this story of a generation which has passed, had very little in it which was really dramatic, so, being a clever member of the cleverer sex, she sought completely to disarm her critics beforehand by dubbing her adaptation "a play without a plot." But this won't do. A play without a plot is properly no play, and is therefore an anachronism in the theatre. More plot or less plot is permissible, but no plot at all is forbidden. No plot, no play.

The mild ambles of the quaint people of "Pride and Prejudice," the work on which "The Bennets" was founded, have nothing in them of the dramatic, let alone the theatrical. In pieces of the modern school we sometimes find a play in which the comparative absence of plot—in the usual sense of the word—is atoned for by the fineness of the characterisation or the keenness of the metaphysical analysis. But the novels of the time of Jane Austen do not supply the groundwork for these. Miss Austen was a brilliant example of a not-too-brilliant school—the school of the glorified weekly novelette. A glorified novelette in which there is not even the element of theatrical and conventional excitement has no reason whatever for existence in a dramatic form.

But there was a pleasant archaic flavour about "The

Bennets," and one was mildly amused at the manners and customs of the time, which are surely slightly caricatured in "Pride and Prejudice." There must be the element of caricature. It cannot be really true—even of those days. It cannot be that a gentleman of the position of Mr. Darcy, in proposing for the hand of a lady, could heap upon her his sense of the great obligation he is conferring—even in those unregenerate days. It cannot be that there were clergymen approaching the sycophancy, the idiotic servility, of the Reverend Mr. William Collins. Miss Austen must have laid the colour on thickly to drive home her very excellent point—the ridiculous length to which the idea of caste might be carried.

The quaint formalities of manner, the pretty "sir" from daughters to father, their rising as he enters the room and curtseying when he leaves it, the pedantries of speech, the last survivals of the masculine bowings and scrapings—all these pleased, but too tamely for the hope to be held out that "The Bennets" could stand anything but the tempered air of a "trial matinée." There was nothing else in it. The love trials of the many daughters of the worthy Mr. Bennet troubled us not at all, even when we learned that one of the younger of them had eloped with a wicked officer and that there was some doubt of there being any preparatory ceremony. It was all too unreal, too timid, too—too novelette.

In many respects the piece was capitally acted. The company was mainly recruited from the ranks of Mr. Benson's stock company, and, for the most part, did him much credit. Unhappily, the bright particular feminine star of them, Miss

Lilian Braithwaite, was prevented by indisposition from appearing. But the observant and humorous Mr. Lyall Swete, the admirable Miss Elsie Chester, Mr. Arthur Whitby, Mr. Harcourt Williams—a gentleman who seems to have founded his style and intonation very closely upon those of Mr. Martin Harvey, who, by the way, is exercising a distinct influence upon more than one of our younger actors—and Miss Elfrida Clement upheld the Bensonian banner with gallant air. They are strong arguments for the efficacy of the regular stock company as a training school for actors. Miss Rosina Filippi contented herself with the small part of Mrs. Bennet, and of course could not have



J. Caswall-Smith.

MISS GERTRUDE KINGSTON.

been improved upon, though it is to be hoped that her days of demure French waiting-maids is not over.

WHEN we are told that "sentiment" will be the keynote of Mr. Esmond's new comedy, "The Wilderness," at the St. James's Theatre, we have no fear that it will be mawkish sentiment or unwholesome, but know that it will be just the right sort of sentiment; sweet and fragrant, without being merely sugary. Mr. Esmond can write "strong" plays, as "The Divided Way" and "Grierson's Way" have proved; but his comedies of sentiment, such as "One Summer's Day," and, we believe, "When we were Twenty-one," are sunny and delightful. If it be true that he has provided his wife, Miss Eva Moore, with "a better chance than ever before," he will have earned our gratitude—for there is no actress upon our stage with a manner more winsomely charming or tenderly sincere. The leading masculine figure, that of Sir Harry Milanor, a character to be played by Mr. George Alexander, is an idealist whose ideals continue after those who have inspired them have proved themselves to be mere human beings. This is something of a novelty. On the stage a man with shattered ideals is usually a murderer, a misogynist, a bigamist, a thief, or a recluse.

Miss Janette Steer will be the temporary manageress of the Garrick Theatre, where she will produce yet another version of "The Queen's Necklace," a play similar in subject to that with which Mrs. Langtry will open the Imperial. Thus London, after two Nell Gwynns, will have two Marie Antoinettes.

Terry's Theatre will shortly reopen with "The Lion Hunters," the new English title of "Le Monde ou l'On s'Ennuie," with which we were delighted

at the Strand Theatre recently. If London does not rush to see Miss Nina Boucicault's delicious performance in Pailleron's most amusing comedy it deserves to be put on a diet of musical comedy and mechanical farce until the time arrives for the New Zealander to be hunting for relics in the neighbourhood of King William Street. Book your seats for your credit's sake, and pay, pay, pay; the more particularly as Miss Susie Vaughan remains in the cast, which has otherwise been materially strengthened by the addition of Mr. Leonard Boyne and Mr. H. B. Irving. We anticipate the renewal of a most fascinating performance.

Admirers of Mr. Forbes Robertson will be curious to know what advantage is to be taken of one of the clauses in the articles of the recently registered "Forbes Robertson Syndicate," which states that its capital of £10,000 may be utilised for the general business of theatre and hotel proprietors. Mr. Forbes Robertson as "mine host" is an appealing figure.

A strong company will appear at the Court Theatre soon, under the management of Mr. Fred Kerr and Mr. H. T. Brickwell, who will produce Messrs. George R. Sims and Leonard Merrick's farce, "A Woman in the Case." Besides Mr. Kerr himself—an actor one is always glad to see—Miss Gertrude Kingston, Mr. W. H. Derny, and Miss Esmé Beringer will appear.

The American company which we are shortly to see at the Shaftesbury Theatre has arrived and is now practising "The Fortune Teller," the musical play in which most of the organisation have already appeared in New York. The "bright particular star" is Miss Alice Neilson, who, in her own country, is famous as the *prima donna* of the light opera company which bears her name.

After Lenten inactivity, the theatres will be busy. Many novelties are promised for the present month, in addition to those already enumerated above. "Coriolanus" at the Lyceum; "Sweet and Twenty," by Captain Basil Hood, at the Vaudeville; "Nicandra" at the Avenue; and "The Girl from Up There," another American musical comedy, with Miss Edna May in the cast, at the Duke of York's, are among the occasions already noted in the diaries of "first-nighters."

Miss Gertrude Kingston, whose fine performance in "The Awakening" at the St. James's Theatre has been the theme of unanimous critical praise, is one of the very few actresses in whose work one sees intellectual as well as emotional qualities. Miss Kingston acts with her brain as well as with her heart. That this in no way diminishes even the mere sentimental effect of her playing is proved by the fire and force of the animated scenes in Mr. Haddon Chambers's drama. Miss Kingston's versatility had striking exemplification in "The Manoeuvres of Jane" at the Haymarket, where she gave us farce-acting at its brightest and best.

PHOEBUS.

WILD . . . COUNTRY LIFE.

April 3rd.

THE SPRING MIGRATION.

OWING to the exigencies of Easter holidays, this week's notes are penned some days earlier than would otherwise have happened, but we have seen enough of the wind and the weather since the blizzards departed to know that, even on this East Coast, the spring migration must be well on its way. First, we witness the departure of our winter residents; then we catch a glimpse

of the passage of the spring migrants—mere trippers of birddom, here to-day and gone to-morrow; and then we welcome the arrival of our summer residents. Widely as, to us who dwell here all the year round, these three classes of travelling birds may seem to differ in their tastes and habits, they are, of course, all moved by the same impulses and all equally regular and domesticated in their nature. But we—that is to say, the inhabitants of the British Isles—are located at the southernmost limit of the migration of some birds, which only stay with us during the cold weather; in the middle of the migrating area of others, which pass us twice a year, in spring and autumn; and at the northern limit of the range of others, which spend the summer here. But they all travel to find food in winter and to find their homes in summer.

DEGREES OF COLD-RESISTANCE.

Just as in the plant world you find some species that can stand sub-Arctic conditions, while others just manage to survive our temperate winters, others can barely resist a single degree of frost, others require a temperature of at least 13deg. above frost, and yet others need to be pampered all the winter with degrees of heat that would hustle our own hardy plants into bloom in a fortnight under the impression that midsummer had suddenly arrived; so it is with birds, but, I think, with this difference. The birds themselves could probably stand a great deal more cold than they usually encounter in their winter quarters. What limits, or rather extends, their range is the disappearance of their food when the weather gets cold. So they have to travel south till they reach a latitude where enough of the right kind of food can be found out of doors even in midwinter.

THE TIME OF CHANGE.

I have said that this necessity of finding food extends, rather than limits, their range, because the place where a bird nests must be regarded as the home of its choice, which it only leaves under compulsion. It would never stray but for the overwhelming need to find food, and it returns as soon as possible. For this reason we know, before we see the swallows or hear the warblers, when they must be on their way to us, because at the vernal equinox, when the sun crosses the Equator to give us for some months that Benjamin's share of his smiles, which he has given to our Australian kinsmen all the winter, then there is always, sooner or later, a prevalence of warm southerly winds which bring out our insects, etc., by myriads and carry the birds northward at the same time. But before this desirable state of things begins to prevail there is the disturbance which precedes climatic change, and of which we have this year had more than our average share in blizzards and snows orms.

THE FIRST SWALLOW'S DATE.

But we can always bear these more cheerfully if we recognise them as indications of the welcome change that is taking place, and when, as now, a week of southerly winds follows, although the weather may still be chill with the aftermath of the north-easters, we know that on these winds, fast as their small wings can carry them, all our little feathered friends of summer are hastening back to us, and that seeing the first swallow and hearing the first cuckoo are only matters of days now. From April 7th to April 9th is the period when I usually hope to see or hear the first summer migrants, though this year April 19th or 20th is the more likely date for Norfolk. By the end of the month we ought to have the cuckoos all around us.

CONSTANCY OF THRUSHES.

Meanwhile it is pleasing to see that many of our thrushes and blackbirds, which seemed to have deserted their nests and eggs, have returned to them. In some cases this is surprising. One thrushes' nest especially was so situated in a furze bush that, although admirably protected on three sides, the entrance unfortunately made a kind of funnel, through which the wind drove snow till the eggs were covered with it, and the nest on one side looked like a work in sugar; yet yesterday the old bird was sitting on the eggs and gazed at me when I peeped in with that air of snug contentment which makes thrushes on their nests look so like frogs from a front view. The redwing, alas! which had promised to depart from the habit of his kind and make his home with us this summer, appears to have abandoned his nest.

THE NESTING REDWING.

To-day for the first time I was able to approach the redwing's ivied tree without discovering him anxiously protesting against my presence in that coppice, flicking his wings and flitting his tail much more than a song-thrush does in similar circumstances. Seen thus, the male redwing in full breeding plumage is a remarkably handsome bird, the pale stripe above his eye and the bright ruddy patch on each side below the wings giving him a distinguished "foreign" appearance that is very un-thrushlike. In his northern home the redwing does not breed until near midsummer, but a pair deciding to remain with us would naturally nest earlier. Indeed, the desire to do so would probably account for the abnormal change of habit.

APARTMENTS FOR TITS.

In the same coppice is the tree from whose vicinity an angry great tit always tried hard to drive me by bad language whenever I went down to watch the redwing. That was before the cold weather returned; but now, because, perhaps, the great tits found the northward opening of the hole which they had selected inconvenient in the blizzard, or because they were disgusted with the idea of nesting at all in such weather, they have abandoned it, and a pair of blue tits have promptly occupied it. Indeed, holes in trees seem to be the crying need of this part of the country, judging by the competition for them. Perhaps this is due to the scarcity of woodpeckers, upon whose labours the tits are in great measure dependent for suitable apartments.

APPEARANCE OF THE BATS.

Bats are gradually becoming more numerous in the evenings, and last night there were four together skimming over the pond after the gnats, which might seem to be specially gifted with cold-resisting powers to provide food for these little mammals. This at least would have been in accord with the old-fashioned theories of Providence, though, of course, the relationship between bats and gnats, as between eater and eaten through all the range of life, goes the other way—that is to say, that wherever and whenever an eatable creature, such as a gnat, abounds, there and then, sooner or later, another creature, such as a bat,

will certainly arrive to eat it; so that if there is any special Providence in the matter, it is that which keeps down the number of gnats, not that which provides the bats with food.

A PROBLEM.

The cause-and-effect arrangements of Nature dovetail together so neatly, however, that there was every excuse for our pre-Darwinian fathers in mistaking one for the other; and very often one is staggered by the difficulty of explaining the commonest occurrence on evolutionary principles. Take these bats, for instance, which hawk over the pond every evening. I do not suppose that on a single mild evening during the winter there was not one bat there, for I saw single bats on the wing at different times during December, January, and February. At the same time the mildness of the weather permitted a slender supply of insects for their provender. Now the weather has taken a turn towards spring, and both bats and insects are more numerous; in a few weeks both will be abundant. Although it is stated on good authority that bats migrate, at any rate occasionally, I do not believe that this gradual increase in numbers is the result of the dropping in of immigrants, yet it requires a little thought to understand how any species can have acquired the habit of awakening from winter sleep a few at a time.

THE USE OF VARIATION.

Yet if we regard habits, as we ought, in the same light as other characteristics which are produced by evolution, the problem is no more difficult than that involved in the explanation of varieties in colouring. The survival of distinct varieties side by side merely shows that, for reasons which we may or may not understand, both help to perpetuate the species. Thus, in the case of light and dark varieties, the light may have the best chance of surviving and producing offspring in one set of circumstances and the dark in another, both sets of circumstances being of sufficiently frequent recurrence to ensure the permanence of the variation. Similarly with the bats, those which come out earliest may, in favourable seasons, have the best chance of producing several broods of young before autumn, whereas those which come out later in the season may run fewer risks of dying without producing offspring at all. Thus each would gain an occasional advantage in reproducing its characteristics and ensuring the survival of the type.

BATS AS REQUIRED.

In a warmer climate than this, however, the early bats would have the greater advantage, and in a colder climate those that lay longer abed would survive in the larger numbers, so that this gradual appearance of the bats in spring may be a compromise peculiar to our region of fickle climates. It is possible, too, that we might have so long a series of treacherous springs as almost to eliminate the early bats, or such a sequence of years with mild weather in the first quarter as to give those which came out early a preponderating advantage. But, whether this would be so, it is at any rate interesting to note how, by some means or other, Nature sends only a few bats abroad when insects are scarce, but lets them all loose as soon as food is plentiful.

E. K. R.



RESTORING AND PRESERVING OIL-PAINTINGS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have some valuable oil-paintings, and perhaps some of your numerous correspondents would give me advice on the following points: 1. The pictures look very dry, and in some cases the paint is chipping off. Would linseed oil, freely washed over the paintings back and front, help to preserve them and arrest the chipping? 2. What is the best material for cleaning pictures? 3. Can pictures be cleaned without affecting the varnish? 4. Is there any book published containing advice on the above points?—H. H.

SPRING FLOWERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Would the enclosed photograph of snowdrops in the corner of my garden be any use for insertion in your paper, if not, I should be obliged if you will return it. I enclose stamped envelope for that purpose.—ALICE HAYNES.

A FOX-TERRIER'S STORY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

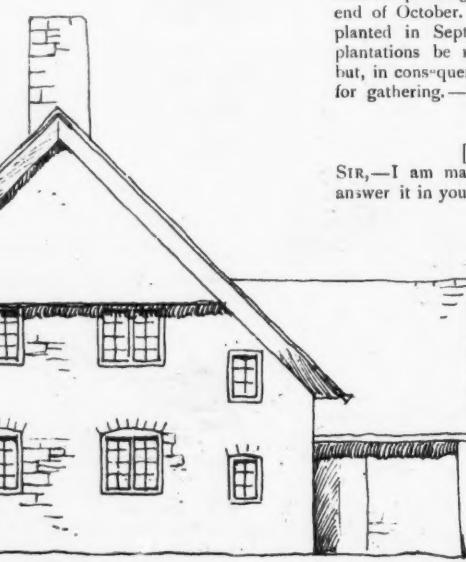
SIR,—You are asking my master how I got that piece taken out of my lip. Ah! well, that was in a fight with another dog; but just cast your eye, sir, on my right ear, and observe that it is almost in two pieces. Now that, of which I am justly proud, was caused by one of the biggest foxes "whatever was seen," as Mr. Jorrocks said. They found him at Forrabby Sticks, and ran him a nine-mile point to Skelmoor Cross Roads, where, as you know, a big drain runs under the road from Skelmoor to Tracington. I happened to be boarding out at the time in case of emergency with Farmer Gunby, who lives not a mile from the Cross Roads. The first intimation I had of what was on the tapas was the fact of being somewhat roughly seized by the scruff of the neck by the dairymaid when I was quietly dreaming of a day's ratting I had had with the



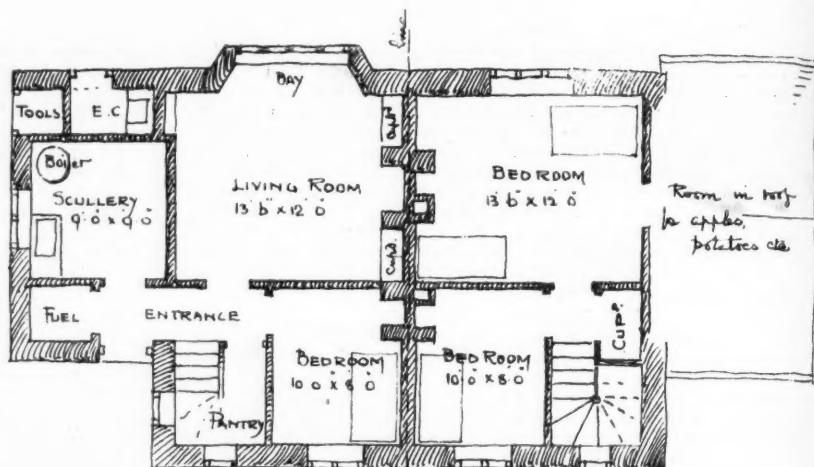
farmer's sons a few days before, and thrust under the right arm of Dick, the second whip, who, with a smile and a "thank ye" to the blushing maid, galloped off with me down the grass roadside. We soon passed through a knot of hunting people, who were anxiously awaiting my arrival and walking their sweating horses to and fro. "The best gallop we have had for a month." "By Jove! that horse carried you well!" "Where's Swith?" "On, he came down at the third fence and lost his horse." "Ah! here's the dog; if he's half as game as his mother he'll do." "No fear of that; I saw him bolt two foxes one after another a fortnight ago." Such were the remarks I heard as we passed through them, and then Dick pulled up and lowered me to the ground. Now, although I was rather annoyed at being rudely woken up and run off with, I determined to justify my admirer's remarks, so with a shake and a quick movement of my lumpy tail, hackles up, I dashed in, determined to have Reynard out in a brace of shakes. I saw him at once about midway down the drain and facing me, evidently having turned round somehow. With an ugly snap and a curl of his upper lip he came at me when a few feet off him. We went at it hammer and tongs for a minute or two, when I slipped in the cramped place we were in, and felt his tusks meet in my ear. In my ruggles to get free he tore my ear down to the point. This, however, set me free. Smarting from the rip his teeth had given me, and wild with rage, I fairly fought him back, snapping and snarling, out of the drain. As soon as he got out of the mouth of it he turned, and with a whisk of his brush dashed through the hedge and disappeared. I heard afterwards, when Farmer Gunby was washing his hands in the kitchen, that they killed him in the open after another three miles; and I have never met his equal since, though I have had some tough set-tos with some of his relations. My old age is spent in my master's smoking-room, where I have permanent quarters allotted to me in the shape of a round wicker basket with a sheepskin mat in it. I always appear at a lawn meet here at the Hall, and get a word or two with some of the old hounds who remember me. They tell me one of my sons is a nailer at bolting—thank you, I'll take a morsel of hot toast—a nailer at bolting a fox, but in politeness—no sugar, thank you—they add that he's not quite as good as papa.—VEFF.

A PAIR OF COTTAGES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]
SIR,—Although expense compels to some extent the erection of unsightly houses, the stringent bye-laws in force in many parts of the country also tend very greatly to level down to one monotonous type much of the smaller class of dwellings, and more particularly those inhabited by the labouring classes. The dreary and depressing rows of uninteresting houses, decked with a veneer of garish ornament, are becoming so common in the outskirts of our towns that they seem almost the accepted type of house, and the idea that modern cottages should be anything but "brick boxes with slate lids" is quite out of the question. These miserable houses, with their thin brick walls and roofs of blue slate, that we see all over the country, make us regret that the days of honest and sensible cottage building are past—when the local materials at hand were felt to be good enough, and were used without stupid and vexatious restrictions. Old country cottages were invariably comfortable, and in nearly all of them there was one snug and cheerful room, free from draughts, in which on a winter's night the family could congregate around the hearth and watch the logs burn brightly; and perhaps it is the absence of this cheery room that the labourer so sadly misses in his modern house. The general living-room is usually so planned as to form a thoroughfare from front to back, with stairs and cupboards opening out of it, so that, sit where he may, it is always draughty and chilly. Of course, in rows of cottages it is somewhat difficult to avoid a certain amount of discomfort, but in cottages where land is not of such paramount importance there should be no excuse for not providing rooms that are cheery and livable. The pair of cottages on an estate in the West of England of which plans are shown are designed by Mr. E. Guy Dawber, and combine the comfort of the old ones with a convenient and simple plan. Firstly, there is only one outer door to the cottage, and only one into the living-room, so reducing draughts to a minimum. On the ground



ELEVATION.



HALF GROUND PLAN.

HALF BEDROOM PLAN.



PAIR OF LABOURERS' COTTAGES.

floor is a small lobby with fuel store, scullery with sink and American copper, store or pantry under the stairs, and one bedroom and living-room, with bay window facing the south and overlooking the garden, and on either side of the fireplace are low cupboards. Upstairs there are two more bedrooms, and a roomy store-place, for the winter onions, apples, and potatoes, in the roof over scullery, etc. Outside is a place for gardening tools, etc., giving all the accommodation a cottage of this sort possibly needs. The materials in this instance are stone outer walls, with rough-cast in the gables, and tiled roofs, but in other parts of the country they could vary with the materials at hand. The roof in old cottages was always one of the most pleasing features in the composition, and in these cottages the roof of simple construction gives character and a kindly sense of warmth and comfort. With a little care and thought good cottages can be built to-day that will compare favourably with those of bygone times.—X.

WATER-CRESS GROWING FOR MARKET.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]
SIR,—In COUNTRY LIFE of March 16th a question was asked about growing water-cress; perhaps the following information may be of service to your correspondent: The water-cress is a hardy perennial, a native of Britain, where it is found growing in ditches and small streams. It is extensively cultivated for the London market, which also receives supplies of this valuable salad from the banks of the Thames and other waters in which the plant naturally grows. It is propagated by seeds; but in large plantations I should prefer slips, or rooted divisions. There are three sorts of this vegetable—the green-leaved, the small brown-leaved, and the large brown-leaved, all of which are the same in taste. The green-leaved is the easiest of cultivation, and the only sort I have grown, whilst the large brown-leaved, on account of its appearance, is preferred in the market. The plants grow better when planted in rows parallel with the course of the stream than when planted in irregular patches. When in rows the plants are more regularly exposed to the influence of the current of water, and the cress is more easily gathered from rows. The plants thrive in shallow water, say, from 3in. to 4in. deep, and the space between the rows must be kept clean and open, so that no mud or soil may remain among the plants, otherwise it is almost impossible to gather the cress in a fit state for market. It will not grow in a muddy bottom, nor will it taste well when there is mud about the roots. The time for planting is from May to the end of June, and from September to the end of October. The plants put in in May are fit to cut in August, and those planted in September are ready in spring. It is most essential that the plantations be made in running water; the plants not only thrive better, but, in consequence of its being rarely frozen in winter, continue in a good state for gathering.—WILLIAM SUTHERLAND.

INSTANTANEOUS PHOTOGRAPHS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]
SIR,—I am making a curious request, in the hope that you may be able to answer it in your paper. It is this: What was the exposure, aperture of lens, and plate used in the snap-shots of the Eton Sports in your issue of March 30th? Also, what was the form of shutter used? Details such as the above would be most interesting to amateur photographers. Considering the time of year, the photographs are very good. Your photographs of "Country Homes" are in themselves good lessons to amateurs as to what to take. Their high level of excellence makes one wish that to each photograph you would annex details of stop, exposure, and time of year. I rather fancy that details of this nature would be very helpful to the hundreds who are trying to improve themselves in photography.—P. H.

[The Sports photographs were taken on Cadet Lightning Plates, with exposures varying from 1-80 to 1-160 of a second with a Cooke lens, and an aperture of 6·5. A Thornton-Pickard behind-lens shutter was used. The Long and High Jump pictures were not taken until after five o'clock, and the light was very poor. It is unfortunately impossible to give the particulars about the "Country Homes" photographs for which you ask.—Ed.]